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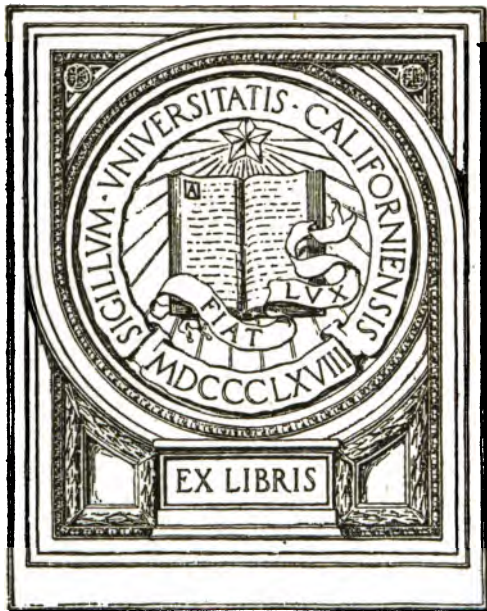
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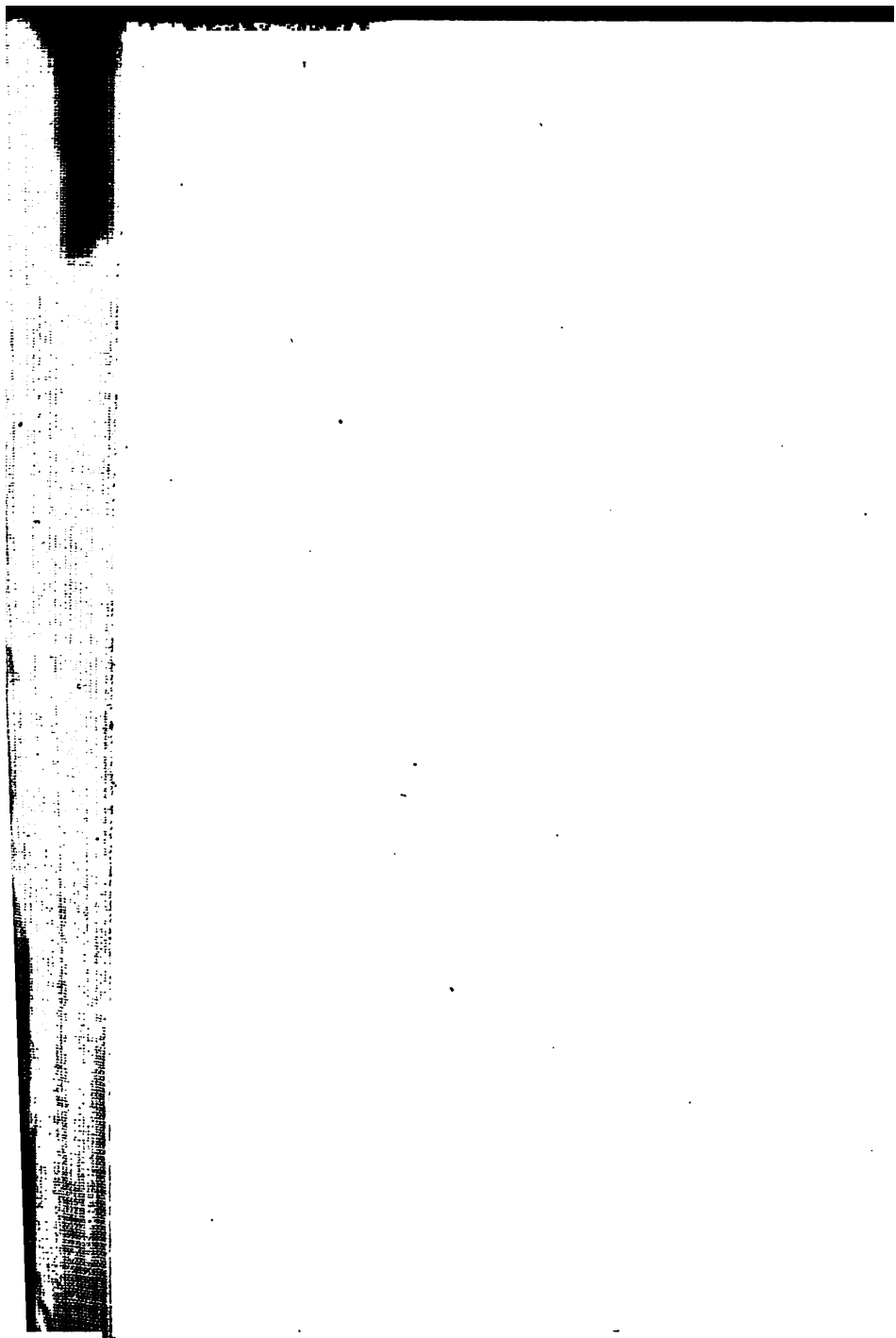
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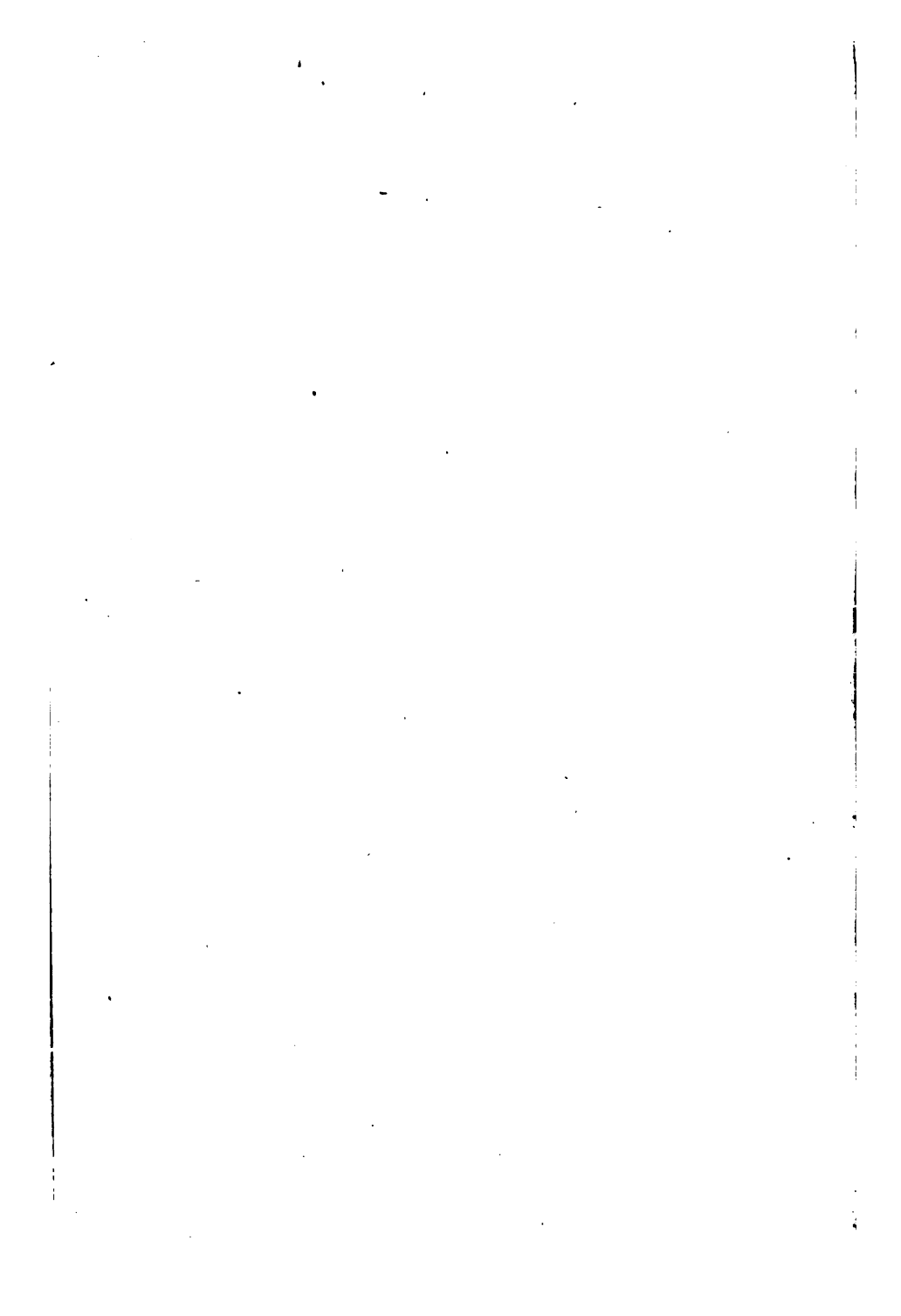
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**POEMS OF PROBLEMS**

**BY THE SAME AUTHOR**

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**POEMS OF PROBLEMS**

# POEMS OF PROBLEMS

BY

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX

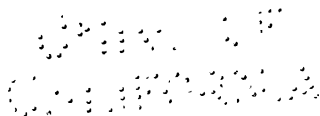


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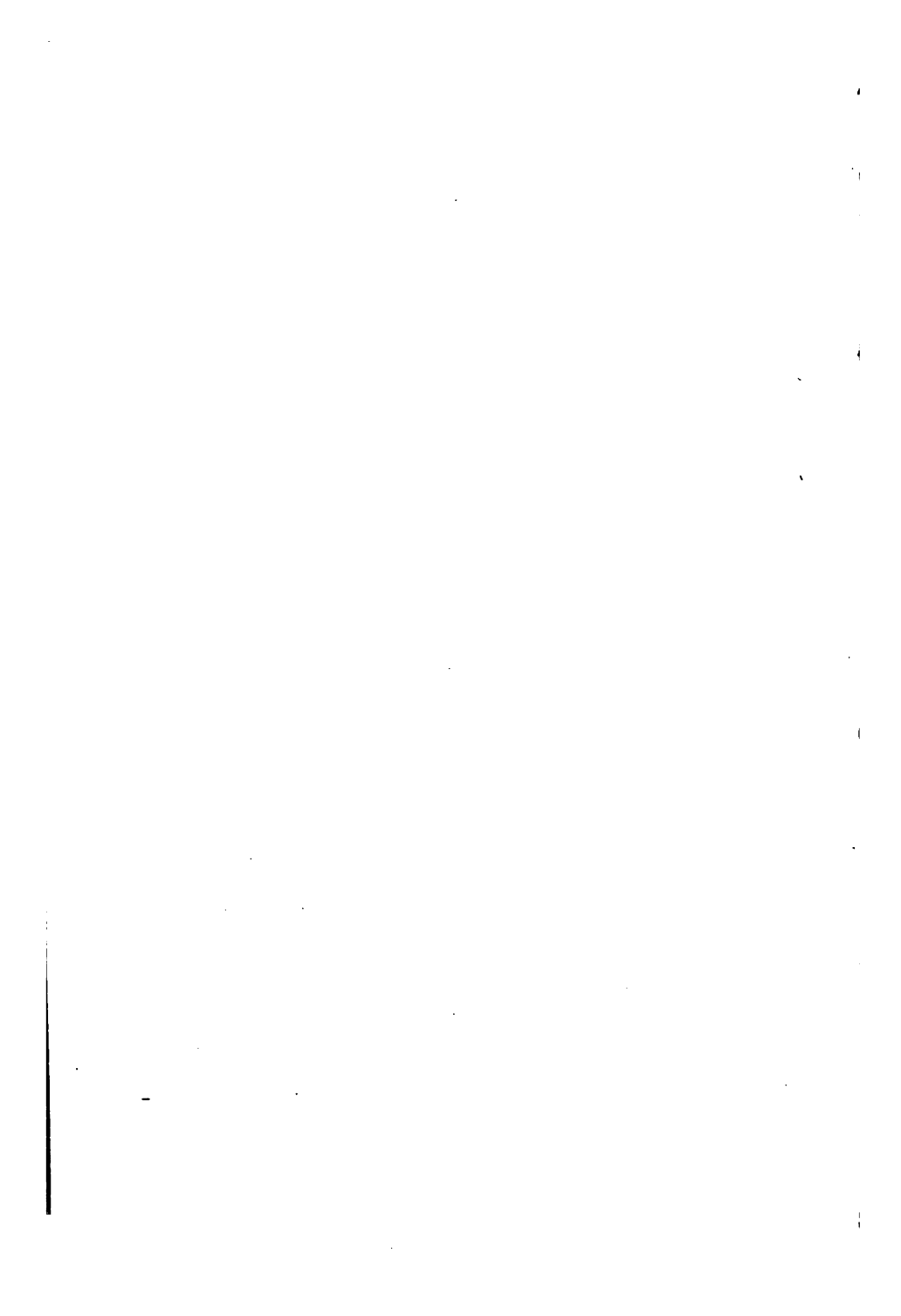
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## ARROW AND BOW



T is easy to stand in the pulpit or in  
the closet to kneel  
And say—"God do this; God do  
that—  
"Make the world better; relieve the  
sorrows of man; for the sake of  
thy son  
"Oh forgive all sin." Then having planned out  
God's work, to feel  
Our duty is done.  
It is easy to be religious this way.  
Easy to pray.

It is harder to stand on the highway, or walk in  
the crowded mart;  
And say "I am He; I am He;  
"Mine the world burden; mine the sorrows of  
men; mine is the Christ work  
"To forgive my brother's sin; and then to live  
the Christ part  
And never to shirk.  
It is hard for you and me  
To be religious this way.  
Day after day.

But God is no longer in heaven; we drove him  
out with our prayers;  
Drove him out with our sermons and creeds,  
and our endless plaints and despairs.  
He came down over the borders, and Christ too  
came along;  
They are looking the whole world over to see just  
what is wrong.  
God has grown weary of hearing his praises  
sung on earth;  
And Jesus is weary of hearing the story about  
his birth;  
And the way to win their favor, that is surer  
than any other,  
Is to join in a song of Brotherhood and praises  
of one another.

No, God is no longer in heaven; He has come  
down on earth to see  
That nothing is wrong with the world He made;  
**THE WRONG IS IN YOU AND ME.**  
He meant the earth for a garden spot, where  
mill and factory stand;  
Childhood he meant for growing time; but look  
at the toiling hand!  
Woman was meant for mother and mate; now  
look at the slaves of lust.  
And the good folks shake their heads and say  
"We must pray to God and trust."

God has a billion books of our prayers unopened  
upon his shelves,  
For the things we are begging of him to do,  
He wants us to do ourselves.

Jehovah, Jesus, and each soul in space  
Are one, and undividable: Until  
We see God shining in each neighbor's face  
And find Him in ourselves and hail Him there,  
Let us be still.

What use is prayer,  
How can we love the whole, and not each part?  
How worship God, and harbor in the heart  
Hate of God's members (for all men are that).  
Too long our souls have sat,  
Like poor blind beggars at the door of God.  
He never made a beggar—We are kings!  
Let us rise up, for it is time we trod  
The mountain-tops; time that we did the things  
We have so long asked God to do.

He waits for you  
To look deep in your brother's eyes and see  
The God within;  
To hear you say "Lo, thou art He; Lo, thou  
art He."

This is the only way to end all sin.  
The difficult, one way.

*A prayer without a deed is an arrow without a  
bow-string;*

*A deed without a prayer is a bow-string without  
an arrow.*

*The heart of a man should be like a quiver full  
of arrows,*

*And the hand of a man should be like a strong  
bow strung for action.*

*The heart of a man should keep his arrows ever  
ascending,*

*And the hand and the mind of a man should  
keep at a work unending.*

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.



## HUSKS



HE looked at her neighbour's house in  
the light of the waning day—  
A shower of rice on the steps, and  
the shreds of a bride's bouquet.  
And then she drew the shade, to shut  
out the growing gloom,  
But she shut it into her heart instead. (Was that  
a voice in the room?)

'My neighbour is sad,' she sighed, 'like the  
mother bird who sees  
The last of her brood fly out of the nest to make  
its home in the trees'—  
And then in a passion of tears—'But, oh, to be  
sad like her:  
Sad for a joy that has come and gone!' (Did  
some one speak, or stir?)  
She looked at her faded hands, all burdened with  
costly rings;

She looked on her widowed home, all burdened  
with priceless things.

She thought of the dead years gone, of the empty  
years ahead—

(Yes, something stirred and something spake, and  
this was what it said:)

*'The voice of the Might Have Been speaks here  
through the lonely dusk;  
Life offered the fruits of love; you gathered only  
the husk.*

*There are jewels ablaze on your breast where  
never a child has slept.'*

She covered her face with her ringed old hands,  
and wept and wept and wept.

**SISTERS OF MINE**



**SISTERS**, sisters of mine, have we done  
what we could  
In all the old ways, through all the  
new days,  
To better the race and to make life  
sweet and good?  
Have we played the full part that was ours in  
the start,  
Sisters of mine?

Sisters, sisters of mine, as we hurry along  
To a larger world, with our banners unfurled,  
The battle-cry on lips where once was Love's old  
song,  
Are we leaving behind better things than we find,  
Sisters of mine?

Sisters, sisters of mine, through the march in the  
street,

Through turmoil and din, without and within,  
As we gain something big do we lose something  
sweet!

In the growth of our might is our grace lost to  
sight!

As new powers unfold do we *love* as of old,  
Sisters of mine!

ANSWER



WELL have we done the old tasks!  
in the old, old ways of earth.  
We have kept the house in order, we  
have given the children birth;  
And our sons went out with their  
fathers, and left us alone at the  
hearth!

We have cooked the meats for their table; we  
have woven their cloth at the loom;  
We have pulled the weeds from their gardens,  
and kept the flowers in bloom;  
And then we have sat and waited, alone in a  
silent room.

We have borne all the pains of travail in giving  
life to the race;  
We have toiled and saved, for the masters, and  
helped them to power and place;

And when we asked for a pittance, they gave it  
with grudging grace.

On the bold, bright face of the dollar all the evils  
of earth are shown.

We are weary of love that is barter, and of virtue  
that pines alone;

We are out in the world with the masters: we are  
finding and claiming our own!

THE SILENT TRAGEDY



THE deepest tragedies of life are not  
Put into books, or acted on the stage.  
Nay, they are lived in silence, by tense  
hearth.

In homes, among dull, unperceiving  
kin,

And thoughtless friends, who make a whip of  
words

Wherewith to lash these hearts, and call it wit.

There is a tragedy lived everywhere  
In Christian lands, by an increasing horde  
Of women martyrs to our social laws.  
Women whose hearts cry out for motherhood ;  
Women whose bosoms ache for little heads ;  
Women God meant for mothers, but whose lives  
Have been restrained, restricted, and denied  
Their natural channels, till at last they stand  
Unmated and alone, by that sad sea  
Whose slow receding tide returns no more.

Men meet great sorrows; but no man can grasp  
The depth, and height, of such a grief as this.

The call of Fatherhood is from man's brain.  
Man cannot know the answer to that call  
Save as a woman tells him. But to her  
The call of Motherhood is from the soul,  
The brain, the body. She is like a plant  
Which buds and blossoms only to bear fruit.  
Man is the pollen, carried by the wind  
Of accident, or impulse, or desire;  
And then his rôle of fatherhood is played.  
Her threefold knowledge of maternity,  
Through three times three great months, is hers  
alone.

Man as an egotist is wounded when  
He is not father. Woman when denied  
The all-embracing rôle of motherhood  
Rebels with her whole being. Oftentimes  
Rebellion finds its only utterance  
In shattered nerves, and lack of self-control;  
Which gives the merry world its chance to cry  
' Old maids are queer.'

In far off Eastern lands



They think of God as Mother to the race;  
Father and Mother of the Universe.  
And mayhap this is why they make their girls  
Wives prematurely, mothers over young;  
Hoping to please their Mother God this way.  
Since everywhere in Nature sex is shown  
For procreative uses, they contend  
Sterility is sinful. (Save when one  
Chooses a life of Saintship here on earth,  
And so conserves all forces to that end.)

Here in the West, our God is Masculine;  
And while we say He bade a Virgin bring  
His Son to birth, we think of Him as One  
Placing false values on forced continence—  
Preparing heavens for those who live that life—  
And hells for those who stray by thought or act  
From the unnatural path our laws have made.

Mother of Christ, thou being woman, thou  
Knowing all depths within the woman heart,  
All joy, all pain, oh send the world more light.  
Enlarge our sympathies; and let our minds  
Turn from achievements of material things  
To contemplation of Eternal truths.

Space throbs with egos, waiting for rebirth;  
And mother-hearted women fill the earth.  
Mother of Christ, show us the way to thin  
The ranks of childless women, without sin.

## THE TRINITY



**M**UCH may be done with the world we  
 are in,  
 Much with the race to better it;  
 We can unfetter it,  
 Free it from chains of the old  
 traditions;  
 Broaden its viewpoint of virtue and sin;  
 Change its conditions  
 Of labour and wealth;  
 And open new roadways to knowledge and health.  
*Yet some things ever must stay as they are*  
*While the sea has its tide and the sky has its star.*  
 A man and a woman with love between,  
 Loyal and tender and true and clean,  
 Nothing better has been or can be  
 Than just those three.

Woman may alter the first great plan.  
 Daughters and sisters and mothers,  
 May stalk with their brothers  
 Forth from their homes into noisy places  
 Fit (and fit only) for masculine man.

Marring their graces  
With conflict and strife  
To widen the outlook of all human life.  
*Yet some things ever must stay as they are*  
*While the sea has its tide and the sky has its star.*  
A man and a woman with love that strengthens  
And gathers new force as its earth way lengthens;  
Nothing better by God is given  
This side of heaven.

Science may show us a wonderful vast  
Secret of life and of breeding it;  
Man by the heeding it  
Out of earth's chaos may bring a new order.  
Off with old systems, old laws may be cast.  
What now seems the border  
Of license in creeds,  
May then be the centre of thoughts and of deeds.  
*Yet some things ever must stay as they are*  
*While the sea has its tide and the sky has its star.*  
A man and a woman and love undefiled  
And the look of the two in the face of a child,—  
Oh, the joys of this world have their changing  
ways,  
But this joy stays.  
Nothing better on earth can be  
Than just those three.

## THE WELL-BORN



O many people—people—in the world;  
So few great souls, love ordered, well  
begun,  
In answer to the fertile mother need!  
So few who seem

The image of the Maker's mortal dream;  
So many born of mere propinquity—  
Of lustful habit, or of accident.  
Their mothers felt  
No mighty, all-compelling wish to see  
Their bosoms garden-places  
Abloom with flower faces;  
No tidal wave swept o'er them with its flood;  
No thrill of flesh or heart; no leap of blood;  
No glowing fire, flaming to white desire  
For mating and for motherhood:  
Yet they bore children.  
God! how mankind misuses thy command,  
To populate the earth!  
How low is brought high birth!

How low the woman ; when, inert as spawn  
Left on the sands to fertilise,  
She is the means through which the race goes on.  
Not so the first intent.

Birth, as the Supreme Mind conceived it, meant  
The clear, imperious call of mate to mate  
And the clear answer. Only thus and then  
Are fine, well-ordered, and potential lives  
Brought into being. Not by Church or State  
Can birth be made legitimate,  
Unless

Love in its fulness bless.  
Creation so ordains its lofty laws  
That man, while greater in all other things,  
Is lesser in the generative cause.  
The father may be merely man, the male ;  
Yet more than female must the mother be.  
The woman who would fashion  
Souls, for the use of earth and angels meet,  
Must entertain a high and holy passion.  
Not rank, or wealth, or influence of kings  
Can give a soul its dower  
Of majesty and power,  
Unless the mother brings  
Great love to that great hour.

THE PRICE HE PAID



SAID I would have my fling,  
And do what a young man may:  
And I didn't believe a thing  
That the parsons have to say.  
I didn't believe in a God  
That gives us blood like fire,  
Then flings us into hell because  
We answer the call of desire.

And I said: 'Religion is rot,  
And the laws of the world are nil;  
For the bad man is he who is caught  
And cannot foot his bill.  
And there is no place called hell;  
And heaven is only a truth  
When a man has his way with a maid,  
In the fresh keen hour of youth.  
And money can buy us grace,  
If it rings on the plate of the church:  
And money can neatly erase  
Each sign of a sinful smirch.'

For I saw men everywhere,  
Hotfooting the road of vice;  
And women and preachers smiled on them  
As long as they paid the price.

So I had my joy of life:  
I went the pace of the town;  
And then I took me a wife,  
And started to settle down.  
I had gold enough and to spare  
For all of the simple joys  
That belong with a house and a home  
And a brood of girls and boys.

I married a girl with health  
And virtue and spotless fame.  
I gave in exchange my wealth  
And a proud old family name.  
And I gave her the love of a heart  
Grown sated and sick of sin!  
My deal with the devil was all cleaned up,  
And the last bill handed in.

She was going to bring me a child,  
And when in labour she cried  
With love and fear I was wild—  
But now I wish she had died.



For the son she bore me was blind  
And crippled and weak and sore!  
And his mother was left a wreck.  
It was so she settled my score.

I said I must have my fling,  
And they knew the path I would go;  
Yet no one told me a thing  
Of what I needed to know.  
Folks talk too much of a soul  
From heavenly joys debarred—  
And not enough of the babes unborn,  
By the sins of their fathers scarred.

## MEDITATIONS

HIS



WAS so proud of you last night, dear  
girl,

While man with man was striving  
for your smile.

You never lost your head, nor once  
dropped down

From your high place  
As queen in that gay whirl.

(It takes more poise to wear a little crown  
With modesty and grace  
Than to adorn the lordlier thrones of earth.)

You seem so free from artifice and wile:  
And in your eyes I read  
Encouragement to my unspoken thought.  
My heart is eloquent with words to plead  
Its cause of passion; but my questioning mind,  
Knowing how love is blind,  
Dwells on the pros and cons, and God knows  
what.

My heart cries with each beat,  
'She is so beautiful, so pure, so sweet,  
So more than dear.'  
And then I hear  
The voice of Reason, asking: 'Would she  
meet  
Life's common duties with good common sense?  
Could she bear quiet evening at your hearth,  
And not be sighing for gay scenes of mirth?  
If, some great day, love's mighty recompense  
For chastity surrendered came to her,  
If she felt stir  
Beneath her heart a little pulse of life,  
Would she rejoice with holy pride and wonder,  
And find new glory in the name of wife?  
Or would she plot with hell, and seek to plunder  
Love's sanctuary, and cast away its treasure,  
That she might keep her freedom and her  
pleasure?  
Could she be loyal mate and mother dutiful?  
Or is she only some bright hothouse bloom,  
Seedless and beautiful,  
Meant just for decoration, and for show?'  
Alone here in my room,  
I hear this voice of Reason. My poor heart

Has ever but one answer to impart,  
'I love her so.'

## HERS

After the ball last night, when I came home  
I stood before my mirror, and took note  
Of all that men call beautiful. Delight,  
Keen, sweet delight, possessed me, when I saw  
My own reflection smiling on me there,  
Because your eyes, through all the swirling  
hours,

And in your slow good-night, had made a fact  
Of what before I fancied might be so;  
Yet knowing how men lie, by look and act,  
I still had doubted. But I doubt no more,  
I know you love me, love me. And I feel  
Your satisfaction in my comeliness.

Beauty and youth, good health and willing mind,  
A spotless reputation, and a heart  
Longing for mating and for motherhood,  
And lips unsullied by another's kiss—  
These are the riches I can bring to you.

But as I sit here, thinking of it all  
In the clear light of morning, sudden fear  
Has seized upon me. What has been your past?

From out the jungle of old reckless years,  
May serpents crawl across our path some day  
And pierce us with their fangs? Oh, I am not  
A prude or bigot; and I have not lived  
A score and three full years in ignorance  
Of human nature. Much I can condone;  
For well I know our kinship to the earth  
And all created things. Why, even I  
Have felt the burden of virginity,  
When flowers and birds and golden butterflies  
In early spring were mating; and I know  
How loud that call of sex must sound to man  
Above the feeble protest of the world.  
But I can hear from depths within my soul  
The voices of my unborn children cry  
For rightful heritage. (May God attune  
The souls of men, that they may hear and heed  
That plaintive voice above the call of sex;  
And may the world's weak protest swell into  
A thunderous diapason—a demand  
For cleaner fatherhood.)

Oh, love, come near;  
Look in my eyes, and say I need not fear.

## DIVORCED



HINKING of one thing all day long,  
at night

I fall asleep, brain weary and heart  
sore;

But only for a little while. At three,  
Sometimes at two o'clock, I wake and lie,  
Staring out into darkness; while my thoughts  
Begin the weary treadmill-toil again,  
From that white marriage morning of our youth  
Down to this dreadful hour.

I see your face  
Lit with the lovelight of the honeymoon;  
I hear your voice, that lingered on my name  
As if it loved each letter; and I feel  
The cling of your arms about my form,  
Your kisses on my cheek—and long to break  
The anguish of such memories with tears,  
But cannot weep; the fountain has run dry.  
We were so young, so happy, and so full

Of keen sweet joy of life. I had no wish  
 Outside your pleasure; and you loved me so  
 That when I sometimes felt a woman's need  
 For more serene expression of man's love  
 (The need to rest in calm affection's bay  
 And not sail ever on the stormy main),  
 Yet would I rouse myself to your desire;  
 Meet ardent kiss with kisses just as warm;  
 So nothing I could give should be denied.

And then our children came. Deep in my soul,  
 From the first hour of conscious motherhood,  
 I knew I should conserve myself for this  
 Most holy office; knew God meant it so.  
 Yet even then, I held your wishes first;  
 And by my double duties lost the bloom  
 And freshness of my beauty; and beheld  
 A look of disapproval in your eyes.  
 But with the coming of our precious child,  
 The lover's smile, tinged with the father's pride,  
 Returned again; and helped to make me strong;  
 And life was very sweet for both of us.

Another, and another birth, and twice  
 The little white hearse paused beside our door

And took away some portion of my youth  
With my sweet babies. At the first you seemed  
To suffer with me, standing very near;  
But when I wept too long, you turned away.  
And I was hurt, not realising then  
My grief was selfish. I could see the change  
Which motherhood and sorrow made in me;  
And when I saw the change that came to you,  
Saw how your eyes looked past me when you  
talked,  
And when I missed the love tone from your  
voice,  
I did that foolish thing weak women do,  
Complained and cried, accused you of neglect,  
And made myself obnoxious in your sight.

And often, after you had left my side,  
Alone I stood before my mirror, mad  
With anger at my pallid cheeks, my dull  
Unlighted eyes, my shrunken mother-breasts,  
And wept, and wept, and faded more and more.  
How could I hope to win back wandering love,  
And make new flames in dying embers leap,  
By such ungracious means?



And then She came,  
Firm-bosomed, round of cheek, with such young  
eyes,

And all the ways of youth. I who had died  
A thousand deaths, in waiting the return  
Of that old love-look to your face once more,  
Died yet again and went straight into hell  
When I beheld it come at her approach.

My God, my God, how have I borne it all!  
Yet since she had the power to wake that look—  
The power to sweep the ashes from your heart  
Of burned-out love of me, and light new fires,  
One thing remained for me—to let you go.  
I had no wish to keep the empty frame  
From which the priceless picture had been  
wrenched.

Nor do I blame you; it was not your fault:  
You gave me all that most men can give—love  
Of youth, of beauty, and of passion; and  
I gave you full return; my womanhood  
Matched well your manhood. Yet had you grown  
ill,

Or old, and unattractive from some cause  
(Less close than was my service unto you),

I should have clung the tighter to you, dear ;  
And loved you, loved you, loved you more and  
more.

I grow so weary thinking of these things ;  
Day in, day out ; and half the awful nights.

THE UNWED MOTHER TO THE WIFE



HAD been almost happy for an hour,  
Lost to the world that knew me in  
the park

Among strange faces; while my little  
girl

Leaped with the squirrels, chirruped with the  
birds

And with the sunlight glowed. She was so dear,  
So beautiful, so sweet; and for the time  
The rose of love, shorn of its thorn of shame,  
Bloomed in my heart. Then suddenly you  
passed.

I sat alone upon the public bench;  
You, with your lawful husband, rode in state;  
And when your eyes fell on me and my child,  
They were not eyes, but daggers, poison tipped.

God! how good women slaughter with a look!  
And, like cold steel, your glance cut through  
my heart,

Struck every petal from the rose of love  
And left the ragged stalk alive with thorns.

My little one came running to my side  
And called me Mother. It was like a blow  
Between the eyes; and made me sick with pain.  
And then it seemed as if each bird and breeze  
Took up the word, and changed its syllables  
From Mother into Magdalene; and cried  
My shame to all the world.

It was your eyes  
Which did all this. But listen now to me  
(Not you alone, but all the barren wives  
Who, like you, flaunt their virtue in the face  
Of fallen women): I do chance to know  
The crimes you think are hidden from all men  
(Save one who took your gold and sold his skill  
And jeopardized his name for your base ends).

I know how you have sunk your soul in sense  
Like any wanton; and refused to bear  
The harvest of your pleasure-planted seed;  
I know how you have crushed the tender bud  
Which held a soul; how you have blighted it;

*THE UNWED MOTHER TO THE WIFE 41*

And made the holy miracle of birth  
A wicked travesty of God's design.  
Yea, many buds, which might be blossoms now  
And beautify your selfish, arid life,  
Have been destroyed, because you chose to keep  
The aimless freedom, and the purposeless,  
Self-seeking liberty of childless wives.

I was an untaught girl. By nature led,  
By love and passion blinded, I became  
An unwed mother. You, an honoured wife,  
Refuse the crown of motherhood, defy  
The laws of nature, and fling baby souls  
Back in the face of God. And yet you dare  
Call me a sinner, and yourself a saint;  
And all the world smiles on you, and its doors  
Swing wide at your approach.

I stand outside.

Surely there must be, higher courts than earth,  
Where you and I will some day meet and be  
Weighed by a larger justice.

## FATHER AND SON



Y grand-dame, vigorous at eighty-one,  
 Delights in talking of her only son,  
 My gallant father, long since dead  
 and gone.

‘Ah, but he was the lad!’

She says, and sighs, and looks at me askance.  
 How well I read the meaning of that glance—

‘Poor son of such a dad;

Poor weakling, dull and sad.’

I could, but would not, tell her bitter truth  
 About my father’s youth.

She says: ‘Your father laughed his way through  
 earth:

He laughed right in the doctor’s face at birth,  
 Such joy of life he had, such founts of mirth.

Ah, what a lad was he!’

And then she sighs. I feel her silent blame,  
 Because I brought her nothing but his name.

Because she does not see

Her worshipped son in me.

I could, but would not, speak in my defence  
Anent the difference.

She says: 'He won all prizes in his time;  
He overworked, and died before his prime:  
At high ambition's door I lay the crime.

Ah, what a lad he was!'

Well, let her rest in that deceiving thought,  
Of what avail to say, 'His death was brought  
By broken sexual laws,  
The ancient sinful cause.'

I could, but would not, tell the good old dame  
The story of his shame.

I could say: 'I am crippled, weak, and pale,  
Because my father was an unleashed male.  
Because he ran so fast, I halt and fail.

(Ah, yes, he was the lad!)

Because he drained each cup of sense-delight  
I must go thirsting, thirsting, day and night.

Because he was joy-mad,  
I must be always sad.

Because he learned no law of self-control,  
I am a blighted soul.'

Of what avail to speak and spoil her joy.

Better to see her disapproving eyes,  
And silent, hear her say, between her sighs,  
‘Ah, but he was the boy!’



THE REVEALING ANGELS



SUDDENLY and without warning they  
came—

The Revealing Angels came.

Suddenly and simultaneously,  
through city streets,

Through quiet lanes and country roads they  
walked.

They walked crying: 'God has sent us to find  
The vilest sinners of earth.

We are to bring them before Him, before the  
Lord of Life.'

Their voices were like bugles;

And then all war, all strife,

And all the noises of the world grew still;

And no one talked;

And no one toiled, but many strove to flee away.

Robbers and thieves, and those sunk in drunk-  
enness and crime,

Men and women of evil repute,

And mothers with fatherless children in their  
arms, all strove to hide.

But the Revealing Angels passed them by,  
Saying: 'Not you, not you.

Another day, when we shall come again  
Unto the haunts of men,

Then we will call your names;

But God has asked us first to bring to him  
Those guilty of greater shames

Than lust, or theft, or drunkenness, or vice—

Yea, greater than murder done in passion,

Or self-destruction done in dark despair.

Now in His Holy Name we call:

Come one and all

Come forth; reveal your faces.'

Then through the awful silence of the world,

Where noise had ceased, they came—

The sinful hosts.

They came from lowly and from lofty places,

Some poorly clad, but many clothed like queens;

They came from scenes of revel and from toil;

From haunts of sin, from palaces, from homes,

From boudoirs, and from churches.

They came like ghosts—

*The vast brigades of women who had slain  
Their helpless, unborn children. With them  
trailed*

Lovers and husbands who had said, 'Do this,'  
And those who helped for hire.

They stood before the Angels—before the Re-  
vealing angels they stood.

And they heard the Angels say;

And all the listening world heard the Angels  
say;

'These are the vilest sinners of all;

For the Lord of Life made sex that birth might  
come;

Made sex and its keen compelling desire  
To fashion bodies wherein souls might go  
From lower planes to higher,

Until the end is reached (which is Beginning).

They have stolen the costly pleasures of the  
senses

And refused to pay God's price.

They have come together, these men and these  
women,

As male and female they have come together  
In the great creative act.

They have invited souls, and then flung them  
out into space;

They have made a jest of God's design.

All other sins look white beside this sinning;

All other sins may be condoned, forgiven;

All other sinners may be cleansed and shriven;

Not these, not these.

Pass on, and meet God's eyes.'

The vast brigade moved forward, and behind  
them walked the Angels,

Walked the sorrowful Revealing Angels.

THE NEW YEAR SHIP



CROSS wide seas of space, from God's  
own bay,  
Straight to the shores of earth it  
ploughed its way,  
And came, full rigged, to anchor in  
the night.

Its sails lie clean against the morning light;  
And on the bridge old Captain Time is standing,  
Proud of the brave new craft he is commanding.

My heart runs dockward, crying, 'Ship ahoy!  
What cargo do you carry—pain or joy?  
Before the crew of Days shall come ashore,  
Bearing each one his portion of your store—  
Tell me what things are hidden in your hold?'

There is no answer. Yet I do make bold  
To prophesy some things Time keeps for me  
In that great New Year ship.

First there will be  
Keen Winter mornings, when the sun and frost  
Wage bloodless battle, with their daggers  
crossed.

The wind will act as second for the sun,  
While trees stand steadfast for the other one.  
Ah! such rare sport!

There will be Spring's return,  
When in old hearts young blood again will burn,  
And young buds deck old trees; while in the  
skies

Vast dawns and sunsets startle and surprise  
A waking world to wonder.

There will come  
Roses so beauteous they strike one dumb;  
(A perfect rose is beauty's final word!)  
While in their scent old memories are stirred  
Of other scenes and times.

Then Autumn's brush  
Shall paint the earth before the final hush  
That means a dying year. Ah! Captain Time,  
You cannot cheat me of these gifts sublime,  
(And countless others that I have not told).  
Whatever else you bring me—or withhold.

THINKING OF CHRIST



THINKING of Christ, and hearing what  
men say

Anent His second coming some near  
day;

Unto the me of Me, I turned to ask,  
What can we do for Him, and by what task,  
Or through what sacrifice, can we proclaim  
Our mighty love, and glorify His name?

Whereon myself replied (thinking of Christ):  
Has not God's glory unto Him sufficed?  
What need has He of temples that men raise?  
What need has He of any songs of praise?  
Not sacrifice nor offerings needs He.  
(Thinking of Christ, so spake Myself to me.)

The rivers from the mountain do not try  
To feed the source from which they gain supply;  
They pay their debt by flowing on and down,  
And carrying comfort to the field and town.

They scatter joy and beauty on their course,  
In gratitude to the Eternal Source.

And thus should we (thinking of Christ) bestow  
The full sweet tides of love that through us flow  
Upon earth's weaker creatures. To the less  
Must flow the greater, would we lift and bless.  
Christ is the mountain source; each heart a  
river;

The thirsting meadows need us, not the Giver.

Thinking of Christ, let us proclaim His worth  
By gracious deeds to mortals on this earth:  
And while we wait His coming, let us bring  
Sweet love and pity to the humblest thing,  
And show our voiceless kin of air and sod  
The mercy of the Universal God.

Not by long prayers, though prayers renew our  
grace—

Not by tall spires, though steeples have their  
place—

Not by our faith, though faith is glorious—  
Can we prove Christ, but *by the love in us*.  
Mercy and love and kindness—seek these three.  
Thus (thinking of Christ) Myself said unto me.



THE TRAVELLER



**B**RISTLING with steeples, high against  
the hill,

Like some great thistle in the rosy  
dawn

It stood; the Town-of-Christian-  
Churches, stood.

The Traveller surveyed it with a smile.

'Surely,' He said, 'here is the home of peace;  
Here neighbour lives with neighbour in accord,  
God in the heart of all; else why these spires?'  
(Christmas season, and every bell ringing.)

The sudden shriek of whistles changed the sound  
From mellow music into jarring noise.

Then down the street pale hurrying children  
came,

And vanished in the yawning Factory door.  
He called to them: 'Come back, come unto Me.'  
The Foreman cursed, and caned Him from the  
place.

(Christmas season, and every bell ringing.)

Forth from two churches came two men, and  
met,  
Disputing loudly over boundary lines,  
Hate in their eyes, and murder in their hearts.  
A haughty woman drew her skirts aside  
Because her fallen sister passed that way.  
The Traveller rebuked them all. Amazed,  
They asked in indignation, 'Who are you,  
Daring to interfere in private lives?'  
The Traveller replied, 'My name is CHRIST.'  
(Christmas season, and every bell ringing.)

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?

I



WHAT have you done, and what are you  
doing with life, O Man!  
O Average Man of the world—  
Average Man of the Christian world  
we call civilised?

What have you done to pay for the labour pains  
of the mother who bore you?

On earth you occupy space; you consume oxy-  
gen from the air:

And what do you give in return for these  
things?

Who is better that you live, and strive, and toil?  
Or that you live through the toiling and striving  
of others?

As you pass down the street does any one look  
on you and say,

'There goes a good son, a true husband, a wise  
father, a fine citizen?

A man whose strong hand is ready to help a  
neighbour,

A man to trust'? And what do women say of  
you?

Unto their own souls what do women say?

Do they say: 'He helped to make the road easier  
for tired feet?

To broaden the narrow horizon for aching eyes?

He helped us to higher ideals of womanhood'?

Look into your own heart and answer, O Average  
Man of the world,

Of the Christian world we call civilised.

## II

What do men think of you, what do they think  
and say of you,

O Average Woman of the world?

Do they say: 'There is a woman with a great  
heart,

Loyal to her sex, and above envy and evil  
speaking:

There is a daughter, wife, mother, with a purpose  
in life:

She can be trusted to mould the minds of little  
children:

She knows how to be good without being dull;  
How to be glad and to make others glad without  
descending to folly;

She is one who illuminates the path wherein she  
walks;

One who awakens the best in every human being  
she meets'!

Look into your heart, O Woman! and answer  
this:

What are you doing with the beautiful years?  
Is your to-day a better thing than was your  
yesterday?

Have you grown in knowledge, grace, and use-  
fulness?

Or are you ravelling out the wonderful fabric  
knit by Time,

And throwing away the threads?

Make answer, O Woman! Average Woman of  
the Christian world.

## THE UNDERTONE



WHEN I was very young I used to feel  
the dark despair of youth;  
Out of my little griefs I would in-  
vent great tragedies and woes;  
Not only for myself, but for all those  
I held most dear  
I would invent vast sorrows in my melancholy  
moods of thought.  
Yet down deep, deep in my heart there was an  
undertone of rapture.  
It was like a voice from some other world calling  
softly to me,  
Saying things joyful.

As I grew older, and Life offered bitter gall  
for me to drink,  
Forcing it through clenched teeth when I re-  
fused to take it willingly;  
When Pain prepared some special anguish for  
my heart to bear,

And all the things I longed for seemed to be  
wholly beyond my reach—

Yet down deep, deep in my heart there was an  
undertone of rapture.

It was like a Voice, a Voice from some other  
world calling to me,  
Bringing glad tidings.

Now when I look about me, and see the great  
injustices of men,

See Idleness and Greed waited upon by luxury  
and mirth,

See prosperous Vice ride by in state, while foot-  
sore Virtue walks;

Now when I hear the cry of need rise up from  
lands of shameful wealth—

Yet down deep, deep in my heart there is an  
undertone of rapture.

It is like a Voice—it is a Voice—calling to me  
and saying:

‘Love rules triumphant.’

Now when each mile-post on the path of life  
seems marked by headstones,

And one by one dear faces that I loved are hid  
away from sight;

Now when in each familiar home I see a vacant  
chair,

And in the throngs once formed of friends I  
meet unrecognising eyes—

Yet down deep, deep in my heart there is an  
undertone of rapture.

It is the Voice, it is the Voice forever saying  
unto me:

'Life is Eternal.'



## GYPSYING



GYPSYING, gypsyng, through the  
 world together,  
 Never mind the way we go, never  
 mind what port.  
 Follow trails, or fashion sails, start  
 in any weather:  
 While we journey hand in hand, everything is  
 sport.

Gypsyng, gypsyng, leaving care and worry:  
 Never mind the 'if' and 'but' (words for cow-  
 ard lips).  
 Put them out with 'fear' and 'doubt,' in the  
 pack with 'hurry,'  
 While we stroll like vagabonds forth to trails,  
 or ships.

Gypsyng, gypsyng, just where fancy calls us;  
 Never mind what others say, or what others do.

Everywhere or foul or fair, liking what befalls  
us ; .

While you have me at your side, and while I  
have you.

Gypsying, gypsying, camp by hill or hollow ;  
Never mind the why of it, since it suits our  
mood.

Go or stay, and pay our way, and let those who  
follow

Find, unspringing from the soil, some small seed  
of good.

Gypsying, gypsying, through the world we  
wander :

Never mind the rushing years, that have come  
and gone.

There must be for you and me, lying over  
Yonder,

Other lands, where side by side we can gypsy on.

DANCE OF THE SONG OF THE  
SYLPHIDES

The unwritten law of the ancient Egyptians demanded that a famous dancer or singer should retire at the height of her career, or die. Amaremu, the wonderful dancer, confessed to the Priest of the Temple that she had decided to die after dancing the Song of the Sylphides. The Priest, who was a great musician, asked her to rehearse the dance for him and he would improvise music for it. The verses are written on the story as related in a papyrus found by Dr. Paul Schlie-mann in the recent excavations of the Temple of Sais. The instrument used by the Priest was a horn fashioned from a human skull. It was known as the Dead Throat, the Skull Horn, and was used in all great orchestras in ancient Egypt.



MAREMU the dancer (oh, a dancer  
of dreams was Amaremu)

Unto the Priest of the Temple, the  
Temple of Sais, drew nigh.

She had reached the height of her  
triumph, and now, as all men knew,  
She must dance no more, or die.

Amaremu the dancer (oh, Amaremu was a  
dancer of songs)

Unto the Priest of the Temple, the Temple of  
Sais, said:

'I will dance the Song of the Sylphides once  
more for the waiting throngs;  
Then go my way with the dead.'

Then answered the Priest to the dancer (to  
Amaremu, dancer of love):  
'Show me the dance of the Sylphides and teach  
me its rhythm and time;  
I will shape you an air on the Skull Horn; I  
will play for you as you move  
Through the Song of the wordless rhyme.'

Amaremu the dancer (dancer of anthems and  
hymns to the sun)  
Danced in the Temple of Sais, alone for the  
Priest who played.  
Slowly the notes from the Skull Horn came  
quivering one by one,  
And slowly the dancer swayed.

Slowly at first, then faster, swayed Amaremu,  
dancer of life's delight;  
And faster and louder and wilder the notes of  
the Skull Horn grew;

*DANCE OF THE SYLPHIDES' SONG* 65

And the Priest was a priest no longer, but a  
man alone at night  
With the dancer Amaremu.

Faster and wilder and madder danced Ama-  
remu, danced Amaremu;  
She flung down garment by garment; she tore  
off veil by veil;  
And the face of the Priest was pallid, and his  
breath came hard as he drew  
From the Skull Horn, sounds like a wail.

Amaremu the dancer (the dancer of dream, and  
song, or rite and feast,  
Dancer of mighty emotions, dancer of terrible  
joys)  
Stood nude in the Temple of Sais, stood nude  
before the Priest,  
In the beauty that destroys.

Amaremu the dancer (oh, Amaremu was dance  
and song and dream)  
Stood white in her awful beauty while the pale  
Priest brought a note

Like the mingled shout of a devil and a soul's  
despairing scream  
From the Skull Horn's hollow throat.

Amaremu the dancer (the dancer of the Syl-  
phides' Song of Death)  
Had finished her dance of passion, and the  
Priest had ceased to play.  
And white as a marble statue, like a statue with-  
out breath,  
In the dead Priest's arms she lay.

THE BIRTH OF THE ORCHID



WRAPPED in her robe of amethyst  
Rose the young Dawn.  
Pallid with passion came the Mist,  
And followed on,  
Fleet as a fawn.

Down by the sea they clasped and kissed:  
Swooned the young Dawn.

Out of that kiss of dew and flame  
The orchid came.

## STAIRWAYS AND GARDENS



ARDENS and Stairways; those are  
 words that thrill me  
 Always with vague suggestions of  
 delight.

Stairways and Gardens. Mystery and  
 grace

Seem part of their environment; they fill me  
 With memories of things veiled from my sight,  
 In some far place.

Gardens. The word is overcharged with mean-  
 ing.

It speaks of moonlight and a closing door.  
 Of birds at dawn—of sultry afternoons.

Gardens. I seem to see low branches screening  
 A vine-roofed arbour with a leaf-tiled floor,  
 Where sunlight swoons.

Stairways. The word winds upward to a land-  
 ing;

Then curves and vanishes in space above.



Lights fall, lights rise ; soft lights that meet and  
blend.

Stairways ; and some one at the bottom standing  
Expectantly with lifted looks of love.  
Then steps descend.

Gardens and stairways. They belong with  
song—

With subtle scents of myrrh and musk—

With dawn and dusk—with youth, romance, and  
mystery,

And times that were and times that are to be.  
Stairways and gardens.

## SONG OF THE ROAD



AM a Road; a good road, fair and  
 smooth and broad;  
 And I link with my beautiful tether  
 Town and Country together,  
 Like a ribbon rolled on the earth,  
 from the reel of God.

Oh, great the life of a Road!

I am a Road; a long road, leading on and on;  
 And I cry to the world to follow,  
 Past meadow and hill and hollow,  
 Through desolate night, to the open gates of  
 dawn.

Oh, bold the life of a Road!

I am a Road; a kind road, shaped by strong  
 hands.

I make strange cities neighbours;  
 The poor grow rich with my labours,

And beauty and comfort follow me through the  
lands.

Oh, glad the life of a Road!

I am a Road; a wise road, knowing all men's  
ways;

And I know how each heart reaches

For the things dear Nature teaches;

And I am the path that leads into green young  
Mays.

Oh, sweet the life of a Road!

I am a Road; and I speed away from the slums,  
Away from desolate places,  
Away from unused spaces;

Wherever I go, there order from chaos comes.

Oh, brave the life of a Road!

I am a Road; and I would make the whole world  
one.

I would give hope to duty,

And cover the earth with beauty.

Do you not see, O men! how all this might be  
done?

So vast the power of the Road!

## THE FORECAST



*T may be that I dreamed a dream; it  
may be that I saw  
The forecast of a time to come, by  
some supernal law.*

I seemed to dwell in this same world,  
and in this modern time;  
All strife had ceased; men were disarmed; and  
quiet Peace had made  
A thousand avenues for toil, in place of War's  
crime trade.  
From east to west, from north to south, where  
highways smooth and broad  
Tied State to State, the waste lands bloomed,  
like garden spots of God.  
There were no beggars in the streets; there were  
no unemployed;  
For each man owned his plot of ground, and  
laboured and enjoyed.  
Sweet children grew like garden flowers, all  
strong and fair to see;

And when I marvelled at the sight, thus spake  
a Voice to me:

'All Motherhood is now an art, the greatest art  
on earth;

And nowhere is there known the crime of one  
unwelcome birth.

From rights of parentage the sick and sinful  
are debarred;

For Matron Science keeps our house, and at the  
door stands guard.

We know the cure for darkness lies in letting  
in the light;

And Prisons are replaced by Schools, where  
wrong views change to right.

The wisdom, knowledge, study, thought, once  
bent on beast and sod,

We give now to the human race, the highest  
work of God;

And, as the gardener chooses seed, so we select  
with care;

And as our Man Plant grows, we give him soil  
and sun and air.

There are no slums; no need of alms; all men  
are opulent,

For Mother Earth belongs to them, as was the  
First Intent.'

*It may be that I dreamed a dream; it may be  
that I saw*

*The forecast of a time to come, by some supernal  
law.*

THE FAITH WE NEED



Too tall our structures, and too swift  
our pace;

Not so we mount, not so we gain the  
race.

Too loud the voice of commerce in  
the land;

Not so truth speaks, not so we understand.

Too vast our conquests, and too large our gains;  
Not so comes peace, not so the soul attains.

But the need of the world is a faith that will  
live anywhere;

In the still dark depths of the woods, or out in  
the sun's full glare.

A faith that can hear God's voice, alike in the  
quiet glen,

Or in the roar of the street, and over the noises  
of men.

And the need of the world is a creed that is  
founded on joy;

A creed with the turrets of hope and trust, no  
winds can destroy;

A creed where the soul finds rest, whatever this  
life bestows,

And dwells undoubting and unafraid, because  
it knows, it knows.

And the need of the world is love that burns in  
the heart like flame;

A love for the Giver of Life, in sorrow or joy  
the same;

A love that blazes a trail to God, through the  
dark and the cold,

Or keeps the pathway that leads to Him clean,  
through glory and gold.

For the faith that can only thrive or grow in  
the solitude,

And droops and dies in the marts of men, where  
sights and sounds are rude;

That is not a faith at all, but a dream of a  
mystic's heart.

Our faith should point as the compass points,  
whatever be the chart.

Our faith must find its centre of peace in a  
babel of noise;



In the changing ways of the world of men it  
must keep its poise ;  
And over the sorrowing sounds of earth it must  
hear God's call ;  
And the faith that cannot do all this, that is  
not faith at all.

## CHRIST CRUCIFIED



OW ere I slept, my prayer had been  
 that I might see my way  
 To do the will of Christ, our Lord  
 and Master, day by day;  
 And with this prayer upon my lips,  
 I knew not that I dreamed,  
 But suddenly the world of night  
 a pandemonium seemed.  
 From forest, and from slaughter house,  
 from bull ring, and from stall,  
 There rose an anguished cry of pain,  
 a loud, appealing call;  
 As man—the dumb beast's next of kin—  
 with gun, and whip, and knife,  
 Went pleasure-seeking through the earth,  
 blood-bent on taking life.  
 From trap, and cage, and house, and zoo,  
 and street, that awful strain  
 Of tortured creatures rose and swelled  
 the orchestra of pain.

And then methought the gentle Christ  
appeared to me, and spoke:  
'I called ye, but ye answered not'—  
and in my fear I woke.

The next I heard the roar of mills;  
and moving through the noise,  
Like phantoms in an underworld,  
were little girls and boys.  
Their backs were bent, their brows were pale,  
their eyes were sad and old;  
But by the labour of their hands  
greed added gold to gold.  
Again the Presence and the Voice:  
'Behold the crimes I see,  
As ye have done it unto these,  
so have ye done to me.'

Again I slept. I seemed to climb  
a hard, ascending track;  
And just behind me laboured one  
whose patient face was black.  
I pitied him; but hour by hour  
he gained upon the path;

He stood beside me, stood upright—  
and then I turned in wrath.  
'Go back!' I cried. 'What right have you  
to walk beside me here?  
For you are black, and I am white.'  
I paused, struck dumb with fear.  
For lo! the black man was not there,  
but Christ stood in his place;  
And oh! the pain, the pain, the pain  
that looked from that dear face.

Now when I woke, the air was rife  
with that sweet, rhythmic din  
Which tells the world that Christ has come  
to save mankind from sin.  
And through the open door of church  
and temple passed a throng,  
To worship Him with bended knee,  
with sermon, and with song.  
But over all I heard the cry  
of hunted, mangled things;  
Those creatures which are part of God,  
though they have hoofs and wings.  
I saw in mill, and mine, and shop,  
the little slaves of greed;

I heard the strife of race with race,  
all sprung from one God-seed.  
And then I bowed my head in shame,  
and in contrition cried—  
'Lo, after nineteen hundred years  
Christ still is Crucified.'

## THE PLOUGH



**F** you listen, you will hear from east  
to west,

Growing sounds of discontent and  
deep unrest.

It is just the progress-driven plough  
of God,

Tearing up the well-worn custom-bounded sod;  
Shaping out each old tradition-trodden track  
Into furrows, fertile furrows, rich and black.  
Oh, what harvests they will yield  
When they widen to a field. .

They will widen, they will broaden, day by day,  
As the Progress-driven plough keeps on its way.  
It will riddle all the ancient roads that lead  
Into palaces of selfishness and greed;  
It will tear away the almshouse and the slum  
That the little homes and garden plots may come.  
Yes, the gardens green and sweet  
Shall replace the stony street.

Let the wise man hear the menace that is blent  
In this ever-growing sound of discontent.  
Let him hear the rising clamour of the race  
That the few shall yield the many larger space.  
For the crucial hour is coming when the soil  
Must be given to, or taken back by Toil.  
Oh, that mighty plough of God ;  
Hear it breaking through the sod !

## THE EARTH

## I



O build a house, with love for architect,  
Ranks first and foremost in the joys  
of life.

And in a tiny cabin, shaped for two,  
The space for happiness is just as great  
As in a palace. What a world were this  
If each soul born, received a plot of ground;  
A little plot, whereon a home might rise,  
And beauteous green things grow!

We give the dead,  
The idle vagrant dead, the Potter's Field;  
Yet to the living not one inch of soil.  
Nay, we take from them soil, and sun, and air,  
To fashion slums and hell-holes for the race.  
And to our poor we say, 'Go starve and die  
As beggars die; so gain your heritage.'

## II

That was a most uncanny dream; I thought the  
wraiths of those



Long buried in the Potter's Field, in shredded  
shrouds arose;

They said, 'Against the will of God  
We have usurped the fertile sod,  
Now will we make it yield.'

Oh! but it was a gruesome sight, to see those  
phantoms toil;

Each to his own small garden bent; each spaded  
up the soil;

(I never knew Ghosts laboured so.)

Each scattered seed, and watched, till lo!  
The Graves were opulent.

Then all among the fragrant greens, the silent,  
spectral train

Walked, as if breathing in the breath of plant,  
and flower, and grain.

(I never knew Ghosts loved such things;  
Perchance it brought back early springs  
Before they thought of death.)

'The mothers' milk for living babes; the earth  
for living hosts;

The clean flame for the un-souled dead.' (Oh,  
strange the words of Ghosts.)

'If we had owned this little spot  
In life, we need not lie and rot  
Here in a pauper's bed.'

## SEPTEMBER



SEPTEMBER comes along the great  
green way  
That Spring and Summer fashioned  
for our feet.  
And though her face is beautiful  
and sweet,  
Though gracious smiles about her ripe mouth  
play,  
Yet subtle recollections of each day  
Of idleness in her large look I meet.  
All things achieved stand small and incomplete  
Beside the boastful promises of May!  
Now I berate fair June, who tempted me  
With fragrant beds of roses, and as well  
Her siren sisters, who were following near;  
But most of all I do accuse the Sea.  
Reach me thine hand, and help me break the  
spell,  
September, matron-mentor of the year!

## OCTOBER

SHE



ONE are the Spring and Summer  
 from the year;  
 And from our lives as well. May  
 we not, dear,

In our October find serene delights  
 To take the place of ardent summer nights!  
 Not striving to retain a dying season,  
 Or imitate its pleasures, but with reason  
 Accepting Autumn's quiet, briefer day  
 Of calm content, not seeking to be gay!

HE

Gone are the Spring and Summer; yet behold  
 The radiant woods, supreme in red and gold  
 And russet colours; and the wind harp plays  
 A louder song than in the April days.  
 Our lives need not be colourless or sober  
 Because of Autumn. Emulate October,  
 Who will not let the ageing years grow dull,  
 But keep its love by being beautiful.

TWO VOICES

VIRTUE



WANTON one, O wicked one, how  
was it that you came,  
Down from the paths of purity, to  
walk the streets of shame?  
And wherefore was that precious  
wealth, God gave to you in trust,  
Flung broadcast for the feet of men to trample  
in the dust?

VICE

O prudent one, O spotless one, now listen well  
to me.  
The ways that led to where I tread these paths  
of sin, were three:  
And God, and good folks, all combined to make  
them fair to see.

VIRTUE

O wicked one, blasphemous one, now how could  
that thing be?

## VICE

The first was Nature's lovely road, whereon my  
life was hurled.

I felt the stirring in my blood, which permeates  
the world.

I thrilled like willows in the spring, when sap  
begins to flow;

It was young passion in my veins, but how was  
I to know?

The second was the silent road, where modest  
mothers dwell,

And hide from eager, curious minds, the truth  
they ought to tell.

That misnamed road called 'Innocence' should  
bear the sign 'To Hell.'

With song and dance in ignorance I walked that  
road and fell.

## VIRTUE

O fallen one, unhappy one, but why not rise  
and go

Back to the ways you left behind, and leave your  
sins below,

Nor linger in this sink of sin, since now you see,  
and know?

## VICE

The third road was the fair highway, trod by the  
good and great.

I cried aloud to that vast crowd, and told my  
hapless fate.

They hurried all through door and wall and  
shut Convention's gate.

I beat it with my bleeding hands: they must  
have heard me knock.

They must have heard wild sob and word, yet  
no one turned the lock.

Oh, it is very desolate, on Virtue's path to  
stand,

And see the good folks flocking by, withholding  
look and hand.

And so with hungry heart and soul, and weary  
brain and feet,

I left that highway whence you came, and sought  
the sinful street.

O prudent one, O spotless one, when good folks  
speak of me,

Go, tell them of the roads I came; the road-  
ways fair, and three.

## THE GRADUATES



SAW them beautiful, in fair array  
upon Commencement Day;  
Lissome and lovely, radiant and  
sweet

As cultured roses, brought to their  
estate

By careful training. Finished and complete  
(As teachers calculate).

They passed in maiden grace along the aisle,  
Leaving the chaste white sunlight of a smile  
Upon the gazing throng.

Musing I thought upon their place as mothers  
of the race.

Oh there are many actors who can play  
Greatly, great parts; but rare indeed the soul  
Who can be great when cast for some small  
rôle;

Yet that is what the world most needs; big hearts



That will shine forth and glorify poor parts  
In this strange drama, Life! Do they,  
Who in full dress-rehearsal pass to-day  
Before admiring eyes, hold in their store  
Those fine high principles which keep old Earth  
From being only earth; and make men more  
Than just mere men! How will they prove  
their worth

Of years of study? Will they walk abroad  
Decked with the plumage of dead bards of God,  
The glorious birds? And shall the lamb unborn  
Be slain on altars of their vanity?  
To some frail sister who has missed the way  
Will they give Christ's compassion, or man's  
scorn?

And will clean manhood, linked with honest  
love,  
The victor prove,  
When riches, gained by greed dispute the claim?  
Will they guard well a husband's home and  
name,

Or lean down from their altitudes to hear  
The voice of flattery speak in the ear  
Those lying platitudes which men repeat  
To listening Self-Conceit?

Musing I thought upon their places as mothers  
of the race,  
As beautiful they, passed in maiden grace.

THE LEADER TO BE



WHAT shall the leader be in that great  
day  
When we who sleep and dream that  
we are slaves  
Shall wake and know that Liberty  
is ours?

Mark well that word—not yours, not mine, but  
ours:

For through the mingling of the separate streams  
Of individual protest and desire,  
In one united sea of purpose, lies  
The course to Freedom.

When Progression takes  
Her undisputed right of way, and sinks  
The old traditions and conventions where  
They may not rise, what shall the leader be?

No mighty warrior skilled in crafts of war,  
Sowing earth's fertile furrows with dead men

And staining crimson God's cerulean sea,  
To prove his prowess to a shuddering world.  
No ruler, purchased by the perjured votes  
Of striving demagogues whose god is gold.  
Not one of these shall lead to Liberty.  
The weakness of the world cries out for strength.  
The sorrow of the world cries out for hope.  
Its suffering cries for kindness.

He who leads

Must then be strong and hopeful as the dawn  
That rises unafraid and full of joy  
Above the blackness of the darkest night.  
He must be kind to every living thing;  
Kind as the Krishna, Buddha, and the Christ,  
And full of love for all created life.  
Oh, not in war shall his great prowess lie,  
Nor shall he find his pleasure in the chase.  
Too great for slaughter, friend of man and  
beast,  
Touching the borders of the Unseen Realms  
And bringing down to earth their mystic fires  
To light our troubled pathways, wise and kind,  
And human to the core, so shall he be  
The coming leader of the coming time.

DISARMAMENT



**E** have outgrown the helmet and  
cuirass,  
The spear, the arrow, and the javelin.  
These crude inventions of a cruder  
age,

When men killed men to show their love of God,  
And he who slaughtered most was greatest king.  
We have outgrown the need of war! Should men  
Unite in this one thought, all war would end.

Disarm the world; and let all Nations meet  
Like Men, not monsters, when disputes arise.  
When crossed opinions tangle into snarls,  
Let Courts untie them, and not armies cut.  
When state discussions breed dissensions, let  
Union and Arbitration supersede  
The hell-created implements of War.  
Disarm the world! and bid destructive thought

Slip like a serpent from the mortal mind  
Down through the marshes of oblivion. Soon  
A race of gods shall rise! Disarm! Disarm!

THE EDICT OF THE SEX



WO thousand years had passed since  
Christ was born,  
When suddenly there rose a mighty  
host  
Of women, sweeping to a central  
goal  
As many rivers sweep on to the sea.  
They came from mountains, valleys, and from  
coasts  
And from all lands, all nations, and all ranks,  
Speaking all languages, but thinking one.  
And that one language—Peace.

‘Listen,’ they said,  
And straightway was there silence on the earth,  
For men were dumb with wonder and surprise.  
‘Listen, O mighty masters of the world,  
And hear the edict of all womankind:  
Since Christ His new commandment gave to  
men,

"*Love one another,*" full two thousand years  
Have passed away, yet earth is red with blood.  
The strong male rulers of the world proclaim  
Their weakness, when we ask that war shall  
cease.

Now will the poor weak women of the world  
Proclaim their strength, and say that war shall  
end.

Hear, then, our edict: Never from this day  
Will any woman on the crust of earth  
Mother a warrior. We have sworn the oath  
And will go barren to the waiting tomb  
Rather than breed strong sons at war's behest,  
Or bring fair daughters into life, to bear  
The pains of travail, for no end but war.  
Ay! let the race die out for lack of babes:  
Better a dying race than endless wars!  
Better a silent world than noise of guns  
And clash of armies.

'Long we asked for peace,  
And oft you promised—but to fight again.  
At last you told us, war must ever be  
While men existed, laughing at our plea  
For the disarmament of all mankind.



Then in our hearts flamed such a mad desire  
For peace on earth, as lights the world at times  
With some great conflagration; and it spread  
From distant land to land, from sea to sea,  
Until all women thought as with one mind  
And spoke as with one voice; and now behold!  
The great Crusading Syndicate of Peace,  
Filling all space with one supreme resolve.  
Give us, O men, your word that war shall end:  
Disarm the world, and we will give you sons—  
Sons to construct, and daughters to adorn  
A beautiful new earth, where there shall be  
Fewer and finer people, opulence  
And opportunity and peace for all.  
Until you promise peace no shrill birth-cry  
Shall sound again upon the ageing earth.  
We wait your answer.'

And the world was still.

While men considered.

## THE SPINSTER

## I



ERE are the orchard trees all large  
with fruit;  
And yonder fields are golden with  
young grain.

In little journeys, branchward from  
the nest,

A mother bird, with sweet insistent cries,  
Urges her young to use their untried wings.  
A purring Tabby, stretched upon the sward,  
Shuts and expands her velvet paws in joy,  
While sturdy kittens nuzzle at her breast.

O mighty Maker of the Universe,  
Am I not part and parcel of Thy World,  
And one with Nature? Wherefore, then, in me  
Must this great reproductive impulse lie  
Hidden, ashamed, unnourished, and denied,  
Until it starves to slow and tortuous death?  
I knew the hope of springtime; like the tree

Now ripe with fruit, I budded, and then  
    bloomed;  
We laughed together through the young May  
    morns;  
We dreamed together through the summer  
    moons;  
Till all Thy purposes within the tree  
Were to fruition brought. Lord, Thou hast  
    heard  
The Woman in me crying for the Man;  
The Mother in me crying for the Child;  
And made no answer. Am I less to Thee  
Than lower forms of Nature, or in truth  
Dost Thou hold Somewhere in another Realm  
Full compensation and large recompense  
For lonely virtue forced by fate to live  
A life unnatural, in a natural world?

## II

Thou who hast made for such sure purposes  
The mightiest and the meanest thing that is—  
Planned out the lives of insects of the air  
With fine precision and consummate care;  
Thou who hast taught the bee the secret power  
Of carrying on love's laws 'twixt flower and  
    flower;

Why didst Thou shape this mortal frame of  
mine,  
If Heavenly joys alone were Thy design?  
Wherefore the wonder of my woman's breast,  
By lips of lover and of babe unpressed,  
If spirit children only shall reply  
Unto my ever urgent mother cry?  
Why should the rose be guided to its own,  
And my love-craving heart beat on alone?

## III

Yet do I understand; for Thou hast made  
Something more subtle than this heart of me;  
A finer part of me  
To be obeyed.

Albeit I am a sister to the earth,  
This nature self is not the whole of me;  
The deathless soul of me  
Has nobler birth.

The primal woman hungers for the man;  
My better self demands the mate of me;  
The spirit fate of me,  
Part of Thy plan.

Nature is instinct with the mother-need;  
So is my heart; but ah, the child of me  
Should, undefiled of me,  
Spring from love's seed.

And if, in barren chastity, I must  
Know but in dreams that perfect choice of me,  
Still will the voice of me  
Proclaim God just.

## THE CURE



YOU may talk of reformations, of the  
 Economic Plan,  
 That shall stem the Social Evil in  
 its course;  
 But the Ancient Sin of nations,  
 must be got at in *THE MAN*.  
 If you want to cleanse a river, seek the source.

Ever since his first beginning, Man has had his  
 way in lust.

He has never learned the law of Self-Control;  
 And the World condones his sinning, and the  
 Doctors say he must,  
 And the Churches shut their eyes, and take  
 his toll.

And the lauded 'Lovely Mothers' send the son  
 out into life  
 With no knowledge-welded armour for the  
 fight;

'He will make his way like others, through the  
Oat field, to the Wife';

'He will somehow be led onward, to the light.'  
Yes, his leaders, they shall find him. On the  
highways at each turn;  
(Since you did not choose to counsel or to  
warn,)

They shall tempt him, then shall bind him; they  
shall blight, and they shall burn,  
Down to offspring and descendants yet un-  
born.

It can never end through preaching; it can  
never end through laws;  
This social sore, no punishment can heal.  
*It must be the mother's teaching of the purpose,  
and the cause,  
And God's glory, lying under sex appeal.*

She must feel no fear to name it to the children  
it has brought;  
She must speak of it as sacred, and sublime;  
She must beautify, not shame it, by her speech  
and by her thought;  
Till they listen, and respect it, for all time.

From the heart they rested under ere they saw  
the light of day,  
Must the daughters and the sons be taught  
this truth;  
Till they think of it with wonder, as a holy  
thing alway;  
While love's wisdom guides them safely  
through their youth.

Oh, the world has made its devil, and the  
Mothers let it grow;  
And the Man has dragged their thoughts  
down to the earth.  
There will be no Social Evil, when each waking  
mind shall know  
All the grandeur and the beauty hid in birth.

When each Mother sets the fashion to win con-  
fidence, and trust,  
And to teach the mighty lesson, Self-Control;  
We can lift the great Sex passion from the  
darkness and the dust,  
And enshrine it on the altar of the soul.



THE CREED



WHOEVER was begotten by pure love,  
And came desired and welcomed into  
life,  
Is of immaculate conception. He  
Whose heart is full of tenderness and  
truth,

Who loves mankind more than he loves himself,  
And cannot find room in his heart for hate,  
May be another Christ. We all may be  
The Saviours of the world, if we believe  
In the Divinity which dwells in us  
And worship it, and nail our grosser selves,  
Our tempers, greeds, and our unworthy aims,  
Upon the cross. Who giveth love to all,  
Pays kindness for unkindness, smiles for frowns,  
And lends new courage to each fainting heart,  
And strengthens hope and scatters joy abroad,  
He, too, is a Redeemer, Son of God.

## THE HEIGHTS



CRIED, 'Dear Angel, lead me to the  
heights,  
And spur me to the top.'  
The Angel answered, 'Stop  
And set thy house in order; make  
it fair

For absent ones who may be speeding there;  
Then will we talk of heights.'

I put my house in order. 'Now lead on!'  
The Angel said, 'Not yet;  
Thy garden is beset  
By thorns and tares; go weed it, so all those  
Who come to gaze may find the unweeded rose;  
Then will we journey on.'

I weeded well my garden. 'All is done.'  
The Angel shook his head.  
'A beggar stands,' he said,  
'Outside thy gates; till thou hast given heed

And soothed his sorrow, and supplied his need,  
Say not that all is done.'

The beggar left me singing. 'Now at last—  
At last the path is clear.'

'Nay, there is one draws near  
Who seeks, like thee, the difficult highway.  
He lacks thy courage; cheer him through the  
day;

Then will we cry, "At last!"'

I helped my weaker brother. 'Now the heights;  
Oh, Guide me, Angel, guide!'

The Presence at my side,  
With radiant face, said, 'Look, where are we  
now!'

And lo! we stood upon the mountain's brow—  
The heights, the shining heights!

## A MAN'S IDEAL



LOVELY little keeper of the home,  
Absorbed in menu books, yet erudite  
When I need counsel; quick at  
repartee  
And slow to anger. Modest as a  
flower,

Yet scintillant and radiant as a star.  
Unmercenary in her mould of mind,  
While opulent and dainty in her tastes.  
A nature generous and free, albeit  
The incarnation of economy.  
She must be chaste as proud Diana was,  
Yet warm as Venus. To all others cold  
As some white glacier glittering in the sun;  
To me as ardent as the sensuous rose  
That yields its sweetness to the burrowing bee.  
All ignorant of evil in the world,  
And innocent as any cloistered nun,  
Yet wise as Phryne in the arts of love  
When I come thirsting to her nectared lips.  
Good as the best, and tempting as the worst,  
A saint, a siren, and a paradox.

**THE RIVER**



**AM** a river flowing from God's sea  
Through devious ways. He mapped  
my course for me;  
I cannot change it; mine alone the  
toil

To keep the waters free from grime and soil.  
The winding river ends where it began;  
And when my life has compassed its brief span  
I must return to that mysterious source.  
So let me gather daily on my course  
The perfume from the blossoms as I pass;  
Balm from the pines, and healing from the  
grass;  
And carry down my current as I go  
Not common stones but precious gems to show.  
And tears (the holy water from sad eyes)  
Back to God's sea, from which all rivers rise,  
Let me convey, not blood from wounded hearts  
Nor poison which the upas tree imparts.  
When over flowery vales I leap with joy,

Let me not devastate them, nor destroy,  
But rather leave them fairer to the sight;  
Mine be the lot to comfort and delight.  
And if down awful chasms I needs must leap,  
Let me not murmur at my lot, but sweep  
On bravely to the end without one fear,  
Knowing that He who planned my ways stands  
near.

Love sent me forth, to Love I go again,  
For Love is all, and over all. Amen.

## UNANSWERED PRAYERS



LIKE some schoolmaster, kind in being  
stern,  
Who hears the children crying o'er  
their slates  
And calling, 'Help me, master!' yet  
helps not,  
Since in his silence and refusal lies  
Their self-development, so God abides  
Unheeding many prayers. He is not deaf  
To any cry sent up from earnest hearts;  
He hears and strengthens when He must deny.  
He sees us weeping over life's hard sums;  
But should He give the key and dry our tears,  
What would it profit us when school were done  
And not one lesson mastered?

What a world  
Were this if all our prayers were answered. Not  
In famed Pandora's box were such vast ills  
As lie in human hearts. Should our desires,

Voiced one by one in prayer, ascend to God  
And come back as events shaped to our wish,  
What chaos would result!

In my fierce youth  
I sighed out breath enough to move a fleet,  
Voicing wild prayers to heaven for fancied boons  
Which were denied; and that denial bends  
My knee to prayers of gratitude each day  
Of my maturer years. Yet from those prayers  
I rose alway regirded for the strife  
And conscious of new strength. Pray on, sad  
heart,  
That which thou pleadest for may not be given,  
But in the lofty altitude where souls  
Who supplicate God's grace are lifted, there  
Thou shalt find help to bear thy daily lot  
Which is not elsewhere found.



## ILLUSION



OD and I in space alone  
And nobody else in view.  
'And where are the people, O Lord,'  
I said,  
'The earth below, and the sky o'er-  
head,  
And the dead whom once I knew!'

'That was a dream,' God smiled and said—  
'A dream that seemed to be true.  
There were no people, living or dead,  
There was no earth, and no sky o'erhead;  
There was only Myself—in you.'

'Why do I feel no fear,' I asked,  
'Meeting You here this way!  
For I have sinned I know full well!  
And is there heaven, and is there hell,  
And is this the judgment day?'

'Nay, those were but dreams,' the Great God  
said,

'Dreams, that have ceased to be.

There are no such things as fear or sin,

There is no you—you never have been—

There is nothing at all but *Me.*'

## THE BIRTH OF JEALOUSY



WITH brooding mien and sultry eyes,  
Outside the gates of Paradise  
Eve sat, and fed the faggot flame  
That lit the path whence Adam  
came.

(Strange are the workings of a woman's mind.)

His giant shade preceded him,  
Along the pathway green, and dim;  
She heard his swift approaching tread,  
But still she sat with drooping head.  
(Dark are the jungles of unhappy thought.)

He kissed her mouth, and gazed within  
Her troubled eyes; for since their sin,  
His love had grown a thousand fold.  
But Eve drew back; her face was cold.  
(Oh, who can read the cipher of a soul.)

'Now art thou mourning still, sweet wife,'  
Spake Adam tenderly, 'the life

Of our lost Eden! Why, in *thee*  
All Paradise remains for me.'  
(Deep, deep the currents in a strong man's  
heart.)

Thus Eve: 'Nay, not lost Eden's bliss  
I mourn; for heavier woe than this  
Wears on me with one thought accursed.  
*In Adam's life I am not first.*'  
(O woman's mind! what hells are fashioned  
there.)

'The serpent whispered Lilith's name:  
( 'Twas thus he drove me to my shame)  
Pluck yonder fruit, he said, and know,  
How Adam loved *her*, long ago.'  
(Fools, fools, who wander searching after pain.)

'I ate; and like an ancient scroll,  
I saw that other life unroll;  
I saw thee, Adam, far from here  
With Lilith on a wondrous sphere.'  
(Bold, bold, the daring of a jealous heart.)

'Nay, tell me not I dreamed it all;  
Last night in sleep thou didst let fall

Her name in tenderness; I bowed  
My stricken head and cried aloud.'  
(Vast, vast the torment of a self-made woe.)

'And it was then, and not before,  
That Eden shut and barred its door.  
Alone in God's great world I seemed,  
Whilst thou of thy lost Lilith dreamed.'  
(Oh, who can measure such wide loneliness.)

'Now every little breeze that sings,  
Sighs Lilith, like thy whisperings.  
Oh, where can sorrow hide its face,  
When Lilith, Lilith, fills all space!'  
(And Adam in the darkness spake no word.)

## GOD'S MEASURE



OD measures souls by their capacity  
For entertaining his best Angel,  
Love.  
Who loveth most is nearest kin to  
God,  
Who is all Love, or Nothing.

He who sits  
And looks out on the palpitating world,  
And feels his heart swell in him large enough  
To hold all men within it, he is near  
His great Creator's standard, though he dwells  
Outside the pale of churches, and knows not  
A feast-day from a fast-day, or a line  
Of Scripture even. What God wants of us  
Is that outreaching bigness that ignores  
All littleness of aims, or loves, or creeds,  
And clasps all Earth and Heaven in its embrace.

A BALLADE OF THE UNBORN  
DEAD



THEY walked the valley of the dead;  
Lit by a weird half light;  
No sound they made, no word they  
said;  
And they were pale with fright.  
Then suddenly from unseen places came  
Loud laughter, that was like a whip of flame.

They looked, and saw, beyond, above,  
A land where wronged souls wait;  
(Those spirits called to earth by love,  
And driven back by hate).  
And each one stood in anguish dumb and wild,  
As she beheld the phantom of her child.

Yea, saw the soul her wish had hurled  
Out into night and death;  
Before it reached the Mother world,  
Or drew its natal breath.

And terrified, each hid her face and fled  
Beyond the presence of her unborn dead.

And God's Great Angel, who provides  
Souls for our mortal land,  
Laughed, with the laughter that derides,  
At that fast fleeting band  
Of self-made barren women of the earth.  
(Hell has no curse that withers like such mirth.)

'O Angel, tell us who were they,  
That down below us fared;  
Those shapes with faces strained and grey,  
And eyes that stared and stared;  
Something there was about them, gave us fear;  
Yet are we lonely, now they are not here.'

Thus spake the spectral children; thus  
The Angel made reply:  
'They have no part or share with us;  
They were but passers-by.'  
'But may we pray for them?' the phantoms  
plead.  
'Yea, for they need your prayers,' the Angel  
said.



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They went upon their lonely way;  
    (Far, far from Paradise);  
Their path was lit with one wan ray  
    From ghostly children's eyes;  
The little children who were never born;  
And as they passed, the Angel laughed in scorn.

## TO MEN



MIRS, when you pity us, I say  
You waste your pity. Let it stay,  
Well corked and stored upon your  
shelves,  
Until you need it for yourselves.

We do appreciate God's thought  
In forming you, before He brought  
Us into life. His art was crude,  
But oh, so virile in its rude

Large elemental strength: and then  
He learned His trade in making men;  
Learned how to mix and mould the clay  
And fashion in a finer way.

How fine that skilful way can be  
You need but lift your eyes to see;  
And we are glad God placed you there  
To lift your eyes and find us fair.

Apprentice labour though you were,  
He made you great enough to stir  
The best and deepest depths of us,  
And we are glad He made you thus.

Ay! we are glad of many things.  
God strung our hearts with such fine strings  
The least breath moves them, and we hear  
Music where silence greets your ear.

We suffer so! but women's souls,  
Like violet powder dropped on coals,  
Give forth their best in anguish. Oh,  
The subtle secrets that we know,

Of joy in sorrow, strange delights  
Of ecstasy in pain-filled nights,  
And mysteries of gain in loss  
Known but to Christ upon the Cross!

Our tears are pitiful to you!  
Look how the heaven-reflecting dew  
Dissolves its life in tears. The sand  
Meanwhile lies hard upon the strand.

How could your pity find a place  
For us, the mothers of the race!

Men may be fathers unaware,  
So poor the title is you wear,

But mothers——! who that crown adorns  
Knows all its mingled blooms and thorns;  
And she whose feet that path hath trod  
Has walked upon the heights with God.

✓ No, offer us not pity's cup.  
There is no looking down or up  
Between us: eye looks straight in eye:  
Born equals, so we live and die.

## REINCARNATION



E slept as weary toilers do,  
 She gazed up at the moon.  
 He stirred and said, 'Wife, come  
 to bed';  
 She answered, 'Soon, full soon.'  
 (Oh! that strange mystery of the  
 dead moon's face.)

Her cheek was wan, her wistful mouth  
 Was lifted like a cup:  
 The moonful night dripped liquid light:  
 She seemed to quaff it up.  
 (Oh! that unburied corpse that lies in space.)

Her life had held but drudgery—  
 She spelled her Bible thro;  
 Of books and lore she knew no more  
 Than little children do.  
 (Oh! the weird wonder of that pallid sphere.)

Her youth had been a loveless waste,  
 Starred by no holiday.

And she had wed for roof, and bread;  
    She gave her work in pay.  
(Oh! the moon-memories, vague and strange and  
    dear.)

She drank the night's insidious wine,  
    And saw another scene:  
A stately room—rare flowers in bloom,  
    Herself in silken sheen.  
(Oh! vast the chambers of the moon, and wide.)

A step drew near, a curtain stirred;  
    She shook with sweet alarms.  
Oh! splendid face; oh! manly grace;  
    Oh! strong impassioned arms.  
(Oh! silent moon, what secrets do you hide!)

The warm red lips of thirsting love  
    On cheek and brow were pressed;  
As the bees know where honeys grow,  
    They sought her mouth, her breast.  
(Oh! the dead moon holds many a dead delight.)

The sleeper stirred and gruffly spake,  
    'Come, wife, where have you been?'  
She whispered low, 'Dear God, I go—  
    But 'tis the seventh sin.'  
(Oh, the sad secrets of that orb of white.)

## RECRIMINATION

## I



AID Life to Death, 'Methinks if I  
were you

I would not carry such an awesome  
face

To terrify the helpless human race.

And if, indeed, those wondrous tales be true  
Of happiness beyond, and if I knew  
About the boasted blessings of that place,  
I would not hide so miserly all trace  
Of my vast knowledge, Death, if I were you.  
But like a glorious angel I would lean  
Above the pathway of each sorrowing soul,  
Hope in my eyes, and comfort in my breath,  
And strong conviction in my radiant mien,  
The while I whispered of that beauteous goal.  
This would I do, if I were you, O Death!

## II

Said Death to Life, 'If I were you, my friend,  
I would not lure confiding souls each day

With fair false smiles, to enter on a way  
So filled with pain and trouble to the end.  
I would not tempt those whom I should defend,  
Nor stand unmoved and see them go astray.  
Nor would I force unwilling souls to stay  
Who longed for freedom, were I you, my friend.  
But like a tender mother I would take  
The weary world upon my sheltering breast  
And wipe away its tears, and soothe its strife.  
I would fulfill my promises, and make  
My children bless me as they sank to rest  
Where now they curse—if I were you, O Life!

## III

Life made no answer; and Death spoke again:  
'I would not woo from God's sweet nothingness  
A soul to being, if I could not bless  
And crown it with all joy. If unto men  
My face seems awesome, tell me, Life, why then  
Do they pursue me, mad for my caress,  
Believing in my silence lies redress  
For your loud falsehoods?' (So Death spoke  
again.)

'Oh, it is well for you I am not fair,  
Well that I hide behind a voiceless tomb



The mighty secrets of that other place.  
Else would you stand in impotent despair  
While unfledged souls straight from the mother's  
womb  
Rushed to my arms, and spat upon your face.'

## THE GULF STREAM



KILLED mariner, and counted sane  
and wise,  
That was a curious thing which  
chanced to me,  
So good a sailor on so fair a sea.  
With favouring winds and blue unshadowed  
skies,  
Led by the faithful beacon of Love's eyes,  
Past reef and shoal, my life-boat bounded free  
And fearless of all changes that might be  
Under calm waves, where many a sunk rock lies.  
  
A golden dawn; yet suddenly my barque  
Strained at the sails, as in a cyclone's blast,  
And battled with an unseen current's force:  
For we had entered when the night was dark  
That old tempestuous Gulf Stream of the  
Past.  
But for love's eyes, I had not kept the  
course.

A MINOR CHORD



HEARD a strain of music in the  
street—

A wandering waif of sound. And  
then straightway

A nameless desolation filled the day.

The great green earth that had been fair and  
sweet,

Seemed but a tomb; the life I thought replete

With joy, grew lonely for a vanished May.

Forgotten sorrows resurrected lay

Like bleaching skeletons about my feet.

Above me stretched the silent, suffering sky,

Dumb with vast anguish for departed suns

That brutal Time to nothingness has hurled.

The daylight was as sad as smiles that lie

Upon the wistful, unkissed mouths of nuns,

And I stood prisoned in an awful world.

## THE SQUANDERER



**G**OD gave him passions, splendid as the  
 sun,  
 Meant for the lordliest purposes; a  
 part  
 Of nature's full and fertile mother  
 heart,  
 From which new systems and new stars are  
 spun.  
 And now, behold, behold, what he has done!  
 In Folly's court and carnal Pleasures' mart  
 He flung the wealth life gave him at the start.  
 (This, of all mortal sins, the deadliest one.)

At dawn he stood, potential, opulent,  
 With virile manhood, and emotions keen,  
 And wonderful with God's creative fire.  
 At noon he stands, with Love's large fortune  
 spent  
 In petty traffic, unproductive, mean—  
 A pauper, cursed with impotent desire.

## PREPARATION



He must not force events, but rather  
make

The heart soil ready for their com-  
ing, as

The earth spreads carpets for the  
feet of Spring,

Or, with the strengthening tonic of the frost,  
Prepares for winter. Should a July noon  
Burst suddenly upon a frozen world  
Small joy would follow, even though that world  
Were longing for the Summer. Should the sting  
Of sharp December pierce the heart of June,  
What death and devastation would ensue!  
All things are planned. The most majestic  
sphere

That whirls through space is governed and  
controlled

By supreme law, as is the blade of grass  
Which through the bursting bosom of the earth  
Creeps up to kiss the light. Poor, puny man  
Alone doth strive and battle with the Force

Which rules all lives and worlds, and he alone  
Demands effect before producing cause.  
How vain the hope! We cannot harvest joy  
Until we sow the seed, and God alone  
Knows when that seed has ripened. Oft we stand  
And watch the ground with anxious, brooding  
eyes,  
Complaining of the slow, unfruitful yield,  
Not knowing that the shadow of ourselves  
Keeps off the sunlight and delays result.  
Sometimes our fierce impatience of desire  
Doth like a sultry May force tender shoots  
Of half-formed pleasures and unshaped events  
To ripen prematurely, and we reap  
But disappointment; or we rot the germs  
With briny tears ere they have time to grow.  
While stars are born and mighty planets die  
And hissing comets scorch the brow of space,  
The Universe keeps its eternal calm.  
Through patient preparation, year on year,  
The earth endures the travail of the Spring  
And Winter's desolation. So our souls  
In grand submission to a higher law  
Should move serene through all the ills of life  
Believing them masked joys.

## SIRIUS

*'Since Sirius crossed the Milky Way, sixty thousand years have gone.'*—GARRETT P. SERVISS.



INCE Sirius crossed the Milky Way  
Full sixty thousand years have gone;  
Yet hour by hour, and day by day,  
This tireless star speeds on and on.

Methinks he must be moved to mirth  
By that droll tale of Genesis,  
Which says creation had its birth  
For such a puny world as this.

To hear how One who fashioned all  
Those Solar Systems, tier on tiers,  
Expressed in little Adam's fall  
The purpose of a million spheres.

And, witness of the endless plan,  
To splendid wrath he must be wrought

By pigmy creeds presumptuous man  
Sends forth as God's primeval thought.

Perchance from half a hundred stars  
He hears as many curious things;  
From Venus, Jupiter, and Mars,  
And Saturn with the beauteous rings,

There may be students of the Cause  
Who send their revelations out,  
And formulate their codes of laws,  
With heavens for faith and hells for doubt.

On planets old ere form or place  
Was lent to earth, may dwell—who knows—  
A God-like and perfected race  
That hails great Sirius as he goes.

In zones that circle moon and sun,  
"Twixt world and world, he may see souls  
Whose span of earthly life is done,  
Still journeying up to higher goals.

And on dead planets grey and cold  
Grim spectral souls, that harboured hate  
Life after life, he may behold  
Descending to a darker fate.



And on his grand majestic course  
He may have caught one glorious sight  
Of that vast shining central Source  
From which proceeds all Life, all Light.

Since Sirius crossed the Milky Way  
Full sixty thousand years have gone;  
No mortal man may bid him stay,  
No mortal man may speed him on.

No mortal mind may comprehend  
What is beyond, what was before;  
To God be glory without end,  
Let man be humble and adore.

## REMEMBERED



THIS art was loving; Eros set his sign  
Upon that youthful forehead, and he  
drew  
The hearts of women, as the sun  
draws dew.  
Love feeds love's thirst as wine feeds love of  
wine;  
Nor is there any potion from the vine  
Which makes men drunken like the subtle  
brew  
Of kisses crushed by kisses; and he grew  
Inebriated with that draught divine.  
Yet in his sober moments, when the sun  
Of radiant summer paled to lonely fall,  
And passion's sea had grown an ebbing  
tide;  
From out the many, Memory singled one  
Full cup that seemed the sweetest of them  
all—  
*The warm red mouth that mocked him and  
denied.*

## THE CALL



*In the banquet hall of Progress  
God has bidden to a feast  
All the women in the East.*

Some have said, 'We are not ready,—  
We must wait another day.'  
Some, with voices clear and steady,  
'Lord, we hear, and we obey.'

Others, timid and uncertain,  
Step forth trembling in the light.  
Many hide behind the curtain  
With their faces hid from sight.

*In the banquet hall of Progress  
All must gather soon or late,  
And the patient Host will wait.*

If to-day or if to-morrow,  
If in gladness, or in woe,

If with pleasure, or with sorrow,  
All must answer, all must go.

They must go with unveiled faces,  
Clothed in virtue and in pride.  
For the Host has set their places,  
And He will not be denied.

THE AWAKENING



LOVE the tropics, where sun and rain  
Go forth together, a joyous train,  
To hold up the green, gay side of the  
world,  
And to keep earth's banners of bloom  
unfurled.

I love the scents that are hidden there  
By housekeeper Time, in her chests of air:  
Strange and subtle and all arife  
With vague lost dreams of a bygone life.

They steal upon you by night and day,  
But never a whiff can you take away:  
And never a song of a tropic bird  
Outside of its palm-decked land is heard.

And nowhere else can you know the sweet  
Soft 'joy-in-nothing' that comes with the heat  
Of tropic regions. And yet, and yet,  
If in evergreen worlds my way were set

I would span the waters of widest seas  
To see the wonder of waking trees;  
To feel the shock of sudden delight  
That comes when the orchard has changed in a  
night,

From the winter nun to the bride of May,  
And the harp of Spring is attuned to play  
The wedding march, and the sun is priest,  
And the world is bidden to join the feast.

Oh, never is felt in a tropic clime,  
Where the singing of birds is a ceaseless chime,  
That leap o' the blood, and the rapture thrill,  
That comes to us here, with the first bird's trill;  
*And only the eye that has looked on snows  
Can see all the beauty that lies in a rose.*  
The lure of the tropics I understand,  
But ho! for the Spring in my native land.

WHAT LOVE IS

AHASUERAS



ELL me thy name!

ESTHER

My name, great sire, is Esther.

AHASUERAS

So thou art Esther? Esther! 'tis a name  
Breathed into sound as softly as a sigh.  
A woman's name should melt upon the lips  
Like Love's first kisses, and thy countenance  
Is fit companion for so sweet a name!

ESTHER

Thou art most kind. I would my name and face  
Were mine own making and not accident.  
Then I might feel elated at thy praise,  
Where now I feel confusion.

AHASUERAS

Thou hast wit  
As well as beauty, Esther. Both are gems

That do embellish woman in man's sight.  
 Yet there are gems of second magnitude!  
 Dost *thou* possess the one great perfect gem—  
 The matchless jewel of the world called *love*?

ESTHER

Sire, in the heart of every woman dwells  
 That wondrous perfect gem!

AHASUERAS

Then, Esther, speak!  
 And tell me what is *love*! I fain would know  
 Thy definition of that much-mouthed word,  
 By woman most employed—least understood.

ESTHER

What can a humble Jewish maiden know  
 That would instruct a warrior and a king?  
 I have but dreamed of love as maidens will,  
 While thou hast known its fulness. All the world  
 Loves Great Ahasueras!

AHASUERAS

All the world  
*Fears great* Ahasueras! Kings, my child,  
 Are rarely loved as anything but kings.



Love, as I see it in the court and camp,  
Means seeking royal favour. I would know  
How love is fashioned in a maiden's dreams.

**ESTHER**

Sire, love seeks nothing that kings can bestow.  
Love is the king of all things here below;  
Love makes the monarch but a bashful boy,  
Love makes the peasant monarch in his joy;  
Love seeks not place, all places are the same,  
When lighted by the radiance of love's flame.  
Who deems proud love could fawn to power and  
splendour  
Hath known not love, but some base-born  
pretender.

**AHASUERAS**

If this be love, I would know more of it.  
Speak on, fair Esther! What is love beside?

**ESTHER**

Love is in all things, all things are in love.  
Love is the earth, the sea, the skies above;  
Love is the bird, the blossom, and the wind;  
Love hath a million eyes, yet love is blind;

Love is a tempest, awful in its might;  
Love is the silence of a moon-lit night;  
Love is the aim of every human soul;  
And he who hath not loved hath missed life's  
goal!

AHASUERAS

But tell me of thyself, of thine own dreams!  
How wouldst thou love, and how be loved again?

ESTHER

Who most doth love thinks least of love's return;  
She is content to feel the passion burn  
In her own bosom, and its sacred fire  
Consumes each selfish purpose and desire.  
'Tis in the giving, love's best rapture lies,  
Not in the counting of the things it buys.

AHASUERAS

Yet, is there not vast anguish and despair  
In love that finds no answering word or smile?

ESTHER

So radiant is love, it lends a glow  
To each dark sorrow and to every woe.  
To love completely is to part with pain,

Nor is there mortal who can love in vain.  
Love is its own reward, it pays full measure,  
And in love's sharpest grief lies subtlest pleasure.

AHASUERAS

Methinks, a mighty warrior, lord or king  
Must in thy fancy play the lover's part;  
None else could wake such reverential thought.

ESTHER

When woman loves one born of lowly state,  
Her thought gives crown and sceptre to her  
mate;  
Yet be he king, or chief of some great clan,  
She loves him but as woman loves a man.  
Monarch or peasant, 'tis the same, I wis,  
When once she gives him love's surrendering  
kiss.

## LOVE'S SUPREMACY



S yon great Sun in his supreme con-  
 dition  
 Absorbs small worlds and makes  
 them all his own,  
 So does my love absorb each vain  
 ambition,  
 Each outside purpose which my life has  
 known.  
 Stars cannot shine so near that vast orb'd  
 splendour ;  
 They are content to feed his flames of fire :  
 And so my heart is satisfied to render  
 Its strength, its all, to meet thy strong desire.  
  
 As in a forest when dead leaves are falling  
 Save all from some perennial green tree,  
 So one by one I find all pleasures palling  
 That are not linked with or enjoyed by thee.  
 And all the homage that the world may proffer,  
 I take as perfumed oils or incense sweet,

And think of it as one thing more to offer,  
And sacrifice to Love, at thy dear feet.

I love myself because thou art my lover,  
My name seems dear since uttered by thy  
voice;

Yet, argus-eyed, I watch and would discover  
Each blemish in the object of thy choice.  
I coldly sit in judgment on each error,  
To my soul's gaze I hold each fault of me,  
Until my pride is lost in abject terror,  
Lest I become inadequate to thee.

Like some swift-rushing and sea-seeking river,  
Which gathers force the farther on it goes,  
So does the current of my love forever  
Find added strength and beauty as it flows.  
The more I give, the more remains for giving,  
The more receive, the more remains to win.  
Ah! only in eternities of living  
Will life be long enough to love thee in.

## PROTEST



O sin by silence, when we should protest,  
 Makes cowards out of men. The  
 human race  
 Has climbed on protest. Had no  
 voice been raised  
 Against injustice, ignorance, and lust,  
 The inquisition yet would serve the law,  
 And guillotines decide our least disputes.  
 The few who dare, must speak and speak again  
 To right the wrongs of many. Speech, thank  
 God,  
 No vested power in this great day and land  
 Can gag or throttle. Press and voice may cry  
 Loud disapproval of existing ills;  
 May criticise oppression and condemn  
 The lawlessness of wealth-protecting laws  
 That let the children and childbearers toil  
 To purchase ease for idle millionaires.

Therefore I do protest against the boast  
 Of independence in this mighty land.

Call no chain strong, which holds one rusted  
link.

Call no land free, that holds one fettered slave.  
Until the manacled slim wrists of babes  
Are loosed to toss in childish sport and glee,  
Until the mother bears no burden, save  
The precious one beneath her heart, until  
God's soil is rescued from the clutch of greed  
And given back to labor, let no man  
Call this the land of freedom.

## THE TECHNIQUE OF IMMORTALITY



HERE hangs a picture on my wall;  
 Three leafless trees; dead woods  
 beyond;  
 Brown grasses and a marshy pond;  
 And over all  
 An amber sunset of late fall.

Too frail the artist heart to cope  
 With all the stern demands of fame.  
 He passed before he won a name,  
 Or gained his hope,  
 To realms where dreams have larger scope.

Yet in the modest little square  
 Of canvas, that I daily see  
 He left a legacy to me  
 Of something rare;  
 For more than what is painted there.

For tree and grass and sunset sky  
 Hold subtler qualities than art;  
 It is the painter's pulsing heart



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That seems to cry,  
"I loved these things—they cannot die."

And so they live to stir and move  
Each gazer's soul; because they speak  
Of something mightier than technique.  
They live to prove  
The immortality of love.

They speak this message day by day;  
"Love, love your work, or small or great;  
Love, love, and leave the rest to fate.  
For love will stay  
When all things else have passed away."

## I WONDER



READ the morning news,  
Here in this cosy spot,  
And life seems a thing most sweet.  
I wonder would I meet  
The coming day with as glad a  
thought  
Had I toiled all night till the break of the  
dawn  
That the world might know what is going on.

I read, and rest, and dream;  
Beside the glowing grate.  
And life seems warm and good.  
I wonder if it would,  
Had it happened that mine were the fate  
To dig like a worm in the deep dark mold  
That the world above me might keep off cold.

Out on the deck I sit,  
While the ship speeds on apace.

Oh, life is a joy at sea.

I wonder would it be  
Had it happened that mine were the place  
Down in the hot close hold of the boat  
To stoke the engine and keep it afloat.

On the flying train I speed  
Off for a holiday;  
And life is a lazy dream.  
I wonder how it would seem  
If I sat while the dark night paled the gray  
Watching the signals with eyes astrain  
And my whole thought bent on guiding the  
train.

Guardian angels who fill sky spaces,  
Unseen Helpers and Spirit Friends,  
Bless all the toilers in humble places  
On whom the comfort of earth depends.  
And waken the heart of the world till it heed  
Their cry of need.

## OMNIPOTENCE



USING at times on this vast Universe,  
My pigmy self, abashed and mortified,  
In patient silence, would henceforth abide,  
Nor strive with its poor protest, to disperse  
The seeming shadows from our one small world.  
That Power which fashioned mountains, shaped  
the sea,  
And into space a million planets hurled,  
Could have no need of any aid from me.

The tiniest seed, what mind can understand  
With all its hidden mysteries of bloom—  
The whole grand system, by a Master planned,  
For human interference leaves no room.  
All things move onward to their certain goal;  
What God conceived, God only can control.

Sudden the old cry breaks upon my ear,  
The protest and appeal of the oppressed!  
Something immortal awakens in my breast,  
And answers to that call, "I hear, I hear!"  
The burdens of the suffering world seem  
mine  
And mine progression's healthful discontent.  
My greater self proclaims itself divine—  
Knows whence it came, and wherefore it was  
sent.

When the first ray pierced through chaotic  
night  
My spirit was conceived by primal force,  
And started on its way to gather light  
And scatter it along earth's troubled course.  
Kin to the sun and sea and wind and sky,  
A part of the Omnipotence am I.

I am important to the perfect plan,  
And I assist the purpose. As the sun  
Completes the projects by the cause begun,  
So His intentions are worked out by man.  
In the construction of a great machine  
The smallest parts are needed by the whole;

The mighty wheel is held by bolts unseen.  
So in God's earth there is no useless soul.

We are the means to some majestic end,  
Through us must come the universal good.  
In us the forces of the Maker blend,  
On us depends the larger brotherhood;  
With us mankind must journey to the heights—  
Let us go forth, and set God's world to rights!

## INTERLUDE



HE days grow shorter, the nights grow  
longer,

The headstones thicken along the  
way ;

And life grows sadder but love grows  
stronger

For those who walk with us, day by day.

The tear comes quicker, the laugh comes slower,

The courage is lesser to do and dare ;

And the tide of joy in the heart runs lower

And seldom covers the reefs of care.

But all true things in the world seem truer,

And the better things of the earth seem best ;

And friends are dearer as friends are fewer,

And love is all as our sun dips west.

Then let us clasp hands as we walk together,

And let us speak softly, in love's sweet tone ;

For no man knows, on the morrow, whether

We two pass by, or but one alone.

## CONSUMMATION



UST when all hope had perished in  
my soul  
And balked desire made havoc  
with my mind,  
My cruel lady suddenly grew  
kind

And sent these written words upon a scroll:  
"When knowing Night her dusky scarf has tied  
Across the bold intrusive eyes of Day  
Come as a glad triumphant lover may  
No longer fearing that he be denied."

I read her letter for the hundredth time;  
And for the hundredth time my gladdened  
sight  
Blurred with the rapture of my vast delight  
And swooned upon the page. I caught the  
chime  
Of far off bells, and at each silvery note  
My heart on tip-toe, pressed its eager ear  
Against my breast; it was such joy to hear  
The tolling of the hour of which she wrote.



The curious Day still lingered in the skies  
And watched me, as I hastened to the tryst.  
But back beyond great clouds of amethyst  
I saw the Night's soft, reassuring eyes.

"Oh, Night!" I cried, "dear Love's considerate  
friend

Haste from the far dim valleys of the west  
And rock this fretful world to peaceful rest  
And bid the Day's insistent vigil end."

Down brooding streets and past the harbored  
ships

The Night's young handmaid, Twilight,  
walked with me.

A spent moon leaned inertly o'er the sea;  
A few pale phantom stars were in eclipse.  
There was the house, my Lady's sea-girt bower  
All draped in gloom, save for one taper's  
glow

Which lit the path where willing feet would  
go:

There was the house, and this the promised hour.

The tide was out, and from the sea's salt path  
Rose amorous odors, filtering through the  
Night  
And stirring all the senses to delight.

(Sweet perfumes left, since Aphrodite's bath.)  
Back in the wooded copse, a whippoorwill  
    Gave love's impassioned and impatient call.  
    On languorous sands I head the waves' kiss  
        fall  
And fall again, so hushed the hour and still.

Light was my knock upon the door, oh light,  
    And yet the sound seemed rude. My pulses  
        beat  
    So loud they drowned the coming of her  
        feet.

The arrow of her taper pierced the gloom.  
The portal closed behind me. She was there  
    Love on her lips and yielding in her eyes  
    And but the sea to hear our vows and sighs  
She took my hand and led me up the stair.

## TIME'S GAZE



TIME looked me in the eyes while  
passing by  
The milestones of the year. That  
piercing gaze  
Was both an accusation and reproach.  
No speech was needed. In a sorrow-  
ing look  
More meaning lies than in complaining words,  
And silence hurts as keenly as reproof.

Oh, opulent, kind giver of rich hours,  
How have I used thy benefits! As babes  
Unstring a necklace, laughing at the sound  
Of priceless jewels dropping one by one,  
So I have laughed while precious moment's  
rolled  
Into the hidden corners of the past.  
And I have let large opportunities  
For high endeavour move unheeded by,  
While little joys and cares absorbed my  
strength.

And yet, dear Time, set to my credit this:  
*Not one white hour have I made black with hate,  
Nor wished one living creature aught but good.*

Be patient with me. Though the sun slants  
west,

The day has not yet finished, and I feel  
Necessity for action and resolve  
Bear in upon my consciousness. I know  
The earth's eternal need of earnest souls,  
And the great hunger of the world for Love.  
I know the goal to high achievement lies  
Through the dull pathway of self-conquest first;  
And on the stairs of little duties done  
We climb to joys that stand thy test. O Time,  
Be patient with me, and another day,  
Perchance, in passing by, thine eyes may smile.

## UNSATISFIED



*HE bird flies home to its young;  
The flower folds its leaves about an  
opening bud;  
And in my neighbor's house there  
is the cry of a child;  
I close my window that I need not  
hear.*

She is mine and she is very beautiful;  
And in her heart there is no evil thought.  
There is even love in her heart,  
Love of life, love of joy, love of this fair world  
And love of me (or love of my love for her);  
Yet she will never consent to bear me a child.  
And when I speak of it she weeps;  
Always she weeps, saying  
"Do I not bring joy enough into your life?  
Are you not satisfied with me and my love  
As I am satisfied with you?  
Never would I urge you to some great peril

To please my whim; yet ever so you urge me;  
Urge me to risk my happiness, yea life itself,  
So lightly do you hold me." And then she weeps  
Always she weeps until I kiss away her tears,  
And soothe her with sweet lies, saying I am  
content.

Then she goes singing through the house like  
some bright bird;

Preening her wings; making herself all beau-  
tiful;

Perching upon my knee, and pecking at my lips  
With little kisses. So again love's ship  
Goes sailing forth upon a portless sea  
From nowhere into nowhere; and it takes  
Or brings no cargoes to enrich the world. The  
years

Are passing by us. We will yet be old  
Who now are young. And all the man in me  
Cries for the reproduction of myself  
Through her I love. Why love and youth like  
ours,

Could populate with gods and goddesses  
This great green earth, and give the race new  
types

Were it made fruitful. Often I can see

As in a vision, desolate old age  
And loneliness descending on us two  
And nowhere in the world, nowhere beyond the  
earth

Fruit of my loins and of her womb to feed  
Our hungry hearts. To me it seems  
More sorrowful than sitting by small graves  
And wetting sad eyed pansies with our tears.

*The bird flies home to its young;  
The flower folds its leaves about an opening bud,  
And in my neighbor's house there is the cry of  
a child,  
I close my window that I need not hear.*

## THE ETERNAL NOW.



TIME with his back against the mighty  
wall  
Which hides from view the  
future's joy and sorrow,  
Hears without answer the impatient  
call,  
Of puny man, to tell him of tomorrow.

Mortal be wise, and to the silence bow;  
These useless and unquiet ways forsaking,  
Concern thyself with the Eternal Now;  
Today holds all things ready for thy taking.



## THE MILL

Great and devastating as are the evils connected with child and woman labor in mills and factories, there must be many a man and woman who finds happiness in the work which these manufactories afford.

It is to voice the feeling which such toilers experience, that this little song is written. And it is sent out with confidence that it will be understood and echoed by the optimistic laborer who finds in his work a means of independence, and an opportunity for the development of his energies.



SOMETHING there is in the mill  
whistle blowing  
Sets my blood flowing—  
Stirs me with life.

Gives me the feeling of being a part  
of it,

Hand of it, heart of it,

Ready to plunge in the thick of the strife

As a strong swimmer goes when the seas are  
rife.

Many have said there was pain in the call of it;

I get the thrall of it;

Nerved and made strong,

My hand reaches out for the work that is wait-  
ing it;

Loving, not hating it;

Loving the noise, and the rush, and the  
throng,

Loving the days as they hurry along.

Over the moil and the murk and the grime in it,

Something sublime in it,

Calls to my soul.

Some things that speak of the ceaseless en-  
deavor

For aye and forever,

Moving the Universe on to its goal,

And each of us parcel and part of the whole.

Oh, there is sorrow, injustice and wrong in it;

But there's a song in it.

All day I hear

Over the din and the discord, the thrill of it,

That's the brave mill of it,

Doing its work without worry or fear

And breathing its message of strength in my  
ear.

Happy, I sing to it;

Smiling, I bring to it,

Patience and love, for the tasks that lie near.

## A WISH



GREAT dignity ever attends great  
 grief;

And silently walks beside it.

And I always know when I meet  
 such woe,

That Invisible Helpers guide it.

And I know deep sorrow is like a tide,

It can not always be flowing

The high water mark in the night and the dark—

Then dawn, and the outward going.

But the people who pull at my heartstrings

hard,

Are the ones whom destiny hurries

Through commonplace ways, to the end of their

days

And pesters with paltry worries.

The peddlers who trudge with a budget of

wares

To the door that is slammed unkindly;

The vender who stands with his shop in his  
hands

Where the hastening hosts pass blindly.

The woman who holds in her poor flat purse,  
The price of her room rent only;  
While her starved eye feeds on the comforts  
she needs

To brighten a lot that is lonely;

The man in the desert of endless work,

Unsoftened by islands of leisure;

And the children who toil in dust and soil,

While their little hearts cry for pleasure.

The people who labor and scrimp and save,

At the call of some thankless duty,

And carefully hide with a mantle of pride

Their ravening hunger for beauty.

These ask no pity and seek no aid,

But the thought of them somehow is haun-  
ing;

And I wish I might fling at them every thing

That I know in their hearts they are want-  
ing.





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